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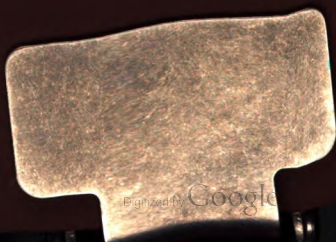
The  
ASSOCIATIVE PRINCIPLE



DURING  
The MIDDLE AGES



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*The Development of the Associative Principle  
during the Middle Ages :*

# Three Lectures,

*Read before the Members and Patrons of the*

*Huddersfield Early Closing Association,*

*During the Winters of 1856, '57, and '58,*

*By CHRISTOPHER BARKER.*

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*PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.*

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*London:*  
*LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS.*

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*m.dccc.lxx.*



TO  
SIR JOHN WILLIAM RAMSDEN, BART., M.P.,

AND  
THE PATRONS AND OFFICERS

OF  
*The Huddersfield Early Closing Association :*

TO  
THE GENTLEMEN WHO KINDLY PRESIDED ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE READING OF THE FOLLOWING PAGES ;

AND TO  
THE ASSOCIATE AND HONORARY MEMBERS ;

*These Lectures*

(PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST)

ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.







## PREFACE.

**T**HE following Essays—written without the slightest intention of publication—are submitted to the public at the urgent request of the gentlemen before whom they were read; and the MS. having been respectfully presented to the Society whose name appears on the title-page, are now published in its behoof.

As an introduction to the study of a branch of literature which has never been without able exponents and ardent students, although at times exposed to satire not altogether undeserved,—a study which at the present day attracts to its pursuit so important a share of intellectual industry and scholarly research,—the author trusts that this little work may be the means of inducing its readers to form a more extended acquaintance with

the subjects so cursorily treated of in its pages : to assist in which design a few references are given ; and at the end of each Essay the authorities within his reach, and other which are known to him by name, are enumerated.

To his young friends of the "Huddersfield Early Closing Society," to whom this series of papers—skeletons, shall he call them ? or rather the *disjecta membra* of the subjects treated of—has been, and now is, more especially addressed, the author has to return thanks for the confidence they reposed in him in requesting his services to further an important object of their Society, namely, mutual instruction, and an increasing stimulative for information in the several departments of literature and science. His good wishes for the success of the Association, and for the realization of its objects, he here wishes to record ; with a hope that, in ages far removed from our day, should some zealous DRYASDUST be disposed to explore its archives or collate the traditions connected with its early history and labours, an honest testimony will be borne to its good works and its beneficial tendency on the age in which it performed its mission ; holding forth to the youth of still

succeeding ages an example of good works and of faith in humanity's moral and physical progression.

With the exception of a slight revision, the Essays are sent to press as nearly as possible in the form in which they were delivered; and with their many imperfections are, not without some hesitation, submitted to the public.

C. B.

*Huddersfield,*  
*November, 1859.*



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HUMAN RACE, THE WHOLE, AT ONE TIME, IS NEVER OLD, OR  
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PETUAL DECAY, FALL, RENOVATION, AND PROGRESS.

BURKE.



## LECTURE I.

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### *The Economy of Monastic Life.*

**U**NDER the title of "THE ECONOMY OF MONASTIC OR CLOISTER LIFE," I am desirous of conveying to you, my friends, an outline of the duties, the employments, and the regulations of an Institution as it existed in our land in days gone by—an institution exercising no unimportant influence on the then state of society; leaving behind it traces of former grandeur and extent; presenting an inviting and by no means an uninteresting subject of enquiry to the general reader as well as to the antiquary and historian; an institution which for some eight hundred years contributed to the development of man's nobler qualities, evidencing a reverence of God and a love to man in the numerous temples, hospitals, sanctuaries, almonries, and magdalens which then covered our land; and which may be, by a law of moral re-action, still contributing to the same end through the various agencies—devotional, edu-



cational, reformatory, and philanthropic—which have, since the removal of this Institution, supplied with (let us hope) an increased utility, its primary intent and aims: thus reconciling even its apologists to a change not less inevitable than beneficial.

A brief—a very brief—sketch of the history of Monachism will be necessary as an introduction to our subject; and here, my friends, at the outset, let me remind you that I am fully aware that, from this my contribution to your course of essays—and perhaps I may infer from such productions generally—no very solid or permanent instruction can be conveyed thereby; that lectures such as these do not present a short cut to the citadel of knowledge; but that they are mainly useful as *stimulants* rather than as *instruments* of education; presenting a *résumé* or bird's-eye view of a subject, directing the enquirer to further sources of information; assisting to keep together or to recall to the student the results of previous investigation; and promoting the interchange of opinion, if, haply, any kindred or sympathising spirits may be brought together. To this object, then, I apply myself, and with this view I crave your indulgent attention.

To Egypt, according to Bishop Tanner,\* the parent country of so many forms of superstition, is generally assigned the birth of Christian Monachism; and the period of its assuming a name and forming rules for the guidance of its members, appears to date from about the year A. D. 300, during the cruelties of the Emperor Dioclesian, known as the tenth and most terrible of the

\* *Notitia Monastica.*

twelve great persecutions of the early Christian Church by the heathen emperors of Rome, which persecution reaching the distant provinces of Egypt and Libya, drove many Christians into the deserts of the Thebais, where, enveloped in thick groves of acacias, the traveller still may visit the exact scenes of their security, and where will be pointed out to him by name the caves and convents of these early anchorets. A wrong construction of many scriptural texts, added to an indifference to the pleasures of the "life that now is," and a longing to be "clothed upon, so that mortality might be swallowed up of life,"\* as an assured hope of a glorified state of future existence is rather obscurely expressed, authorised the adoption of a system whose archetype existed in the Jewish sect of the Essenes; whilst an admiration of the characters and sufferings of the martyrs—and that period was emphatically the era of martyrdom—increased the spirit which prevailed for embracing the new institution. We cannot here enter into any particulars of the habits and manners of these early monks: suffice to say, that they practised extreme abstinence, chastity, and self-mortification,—that most of their time was devoted to reading the scriptures, and adapting them allegorically to the Alexandrian philosophy, that they composed hymns and liturgical services, that they wore the short cloak of the Greek philosophers, a garment which we are told is worn to this day by the more austere of the Egyptian monks. The names of Paul the first anchoret, of Pachonius the first who governed by a code

\* 2 Cor. v. 4.

of rules; of St. Antony, the first superior over an incorporated body; of St. Basil, afterwards Bishop of Cæsarea, by whom the new institution was introduced into Asia Minor, and rapidly spread over the greater part of the East; of Symeon Stylites, who appears to have eclipsed all others by the severity of his self-imposed austerities; these, with many others, will recur to the memory of readers of early ecclesiastical history. In the following century it is recorded to have been introduced into France by St. Martin; into Ireland by St. Patrick; and shortly afterwards to have become general over the whole of Christianized Europe.

Confining, as we intend, our sketch of cloister life to our own land, we must remark that the history of the early British Church is enveloped in thick obscurity; but it seems to have derived its Christianity from an eastern source, and its monastic system was probably derived from that established by St. Martin, the abbot-bishop of Tours. The British monasteries appear to have been very large. Bede relates that there were no less than 2100 monks in the monastic establishment of Bangor at the time of St. Augustine's connection with it—that is in the 6th century—and there is reason to believe that the number is not over-stated. These early British monasteries appear to have been schools of learning, or or rather to have supplied, so far as was compatible with the requirements of a purer faith, the various offices of the earlier Druidical priesthood.

About the year A. D. 530 St. Benedict, an Italian of noble birth and great reputation, introduced into his monastery at Monte Cassino, a hill between Rome and

Naples, a new monastic rule. To the three vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, which formed the foundation of most of the old rules, he added another, that of **MANUAL LABOUR** for seven hours a day ; and that not only for self-support, but also as a duty to God and man. *Orandum est labore* was henceforth practically to become the *formula* of each society : though in justice to these bodies we must remember that they were at no time entirely disassociated with useful labour. Bede, speaking of a date long anterior to his own day, states that Easterwin, abbot of Wearmouth, cultivated with his own hands his church's lands and forged the ploughshares to do the work ; and the constant connection of certain trades with the names of men, eminent in their day for piety and austerity, such as St. Nicholas with mariners, St. Crispin with the "gentle craft," St. Blaise with the trade of our own locality, and numerous others, would imply that the example of the great apostle in "labouring with his own hands" had frequent, if not habitual, imitators.

Another important feature of the rule of St. Benedict was that the vows taken under it were to be perpetual ; and a daily routine of monastic life was laid down in greater detail than any preceding rules had enjoined.\* The rule of St. Benedict speedily became popular ; the majority of existing monasteries embraced it ; nearly all new monasteries afterwards adopted it ; and, in proof of

\* Since the reading of this paper, the compiler has observed that a manual or "Rationale" of the rule of St. Benedict has been given to the public by the Most Reverend Dr. Ullathorne, Bishop of Birmingham.—*London, Longmans.*

its universality of acceptance, we are told that when Charlemagne caused enquiries to be made about the beginning of the eighth century, no other monastic rule was found existing throughout his vast dominions. The monasteries of the early British Church, however, do not appear to have embraced the new rule.

We now come to that memorable event in the history of the Church, the Mission of St. Augustine, A. D. 596. This great apostle of the Anglo-Saxons was Prior of a Benedictine monastery which the then Pope, Gregory the Great, had founded on the Celian Hill, a suburb of Rome, and his forty missionaries were monks of the same house. It cannot be doubted that they would introduce their order into these parts where their influence extended: but as a large part of Saxon England owed its Christianity to the missionaries of the native church, which still flourished in the western and south-western parts of the island, occasional disputes would arise and obstacles exist, regarding its adoption; and hence we find that no uniform rule was observed by the Saxon monasteries: some keeping the rules of St. Basil, some of St. Benedict, and others to have modified the ancient rules, so as to adapt them to their own circumstances and wishes. About this period great havoc was made among the monasteries by the incursions of the Danes—merciless and pitiless above all former invaders; and the harassed and unsettled monks, mingling in society, became lax in their discipline, and even adopted its customs by marrying. This gave occasion to the ejectment, by St. Dunstan, of all the married clergy from the cathedrals and monasteries, not without opposition on the part of some, and of

rather peremptory treatment on his part; and thus, about the middle of the ninth century the Benedictine rule became general in the west. From this date to about the end of the twelfth century, the founding of monasteries in England became most general—the conversion of the Danes, the increasing intercourse with Rome, the zeal of many of the heptarchal kings, instances being recorded of some of them exchanging the crown for the cowl, the enthusiasm created by the crusades,—the latter event at once calling forth the valour of the mailed knight in distant Palestine, and the piety mingled with conjugal, filial, or parental devotion at home, evidenced by bequests of broad acres, the foundation of religious houses, and not unfrequently by the self-devotion of the object most dear to the crusading warrior; hence we find that upon the dissolution of monasteries by Henry VIII. not less than five-sevenths (about 555) were founded between the time of the Conquest and King John. I may here add, that the cessation of founding monasteries (few being established after the 13th century) is to be explained in the continued struggle for political or rather oligarchic privileges by the great barons, from the time of Stephen to the signing of Magna Charta; whilst the presentation to the government of these houses being generally vested in the crown, and from the great political and social influence of their heads—many of them exercising episcopal functions and taking rank with the most powerful of the barons,—led to the suspicion that they were but too ready to become the abettors of royal usurpation, and inimical to the claims of the already too powerful nobles.

The Benedictine rule had now been all but universal in the western church for some four centuries; but during this period its observance had gradually become relaxed. We cannot be surprised at this, as it was found that the seven hours of manual labour (which the rule required) occupied time which might better be devoted to the learned studies for which the Benedictines were then, as they always have been, distinguished. We need not be surprised, then, that the excessive abstinence and many other of the mechanical observances of the rule would soon be found to be of but little real utility. The obligation to labour, more especially agricultural pursuits, appears to have been gradually dispensed with, for we find that about this time sundry menial offices were performed by a class of lay brothers, pious but illiterate persons, who devoted themselves to the services of the religious. These never entered the choir, were not present at the chapter, and made the vows only of constancy and obedience. In that most interesting monument of English language and literature, and also of the social and political condition of the country in the fourteenth century, known as the "Vision and Creed of Piers Ploughman," many allusions, not of the most complimentary character, are made to the monastic institution; and considerable light is thrown upon it in that remarkable fragment of monastic and national history, the "Chronicle of Jocelyn of Brakelonga," a monk of St. Edmundsbury, republished some few years ago by the Camden Society, and which at the time became so well known from Mr. Carlyle expatiating from its text his peculiar views of social and political

economy, under the title of "Past and Present." This remarkable historical fragment of the time of Richard I. and John gives us in true Boswellian style the sayings and doings of Abbot Sampson, in restoring the discipline, reforming abuses, and governing well and wisely, that most noted establishment; a book, (or rather that portion of it relating to our subject,) to which—as it can readily be procured at almost every library—I beg to direct your attention. From these fragments we may thus sum up the general characteristics of Benedictine life of that and a subsequent period: its members, wealthy and learned; influential from their broad possessions, but still more influential from the fact that nearly all the literature and art and science of the period were to be found in their body. In that age of feudalism they were the especial protectors of the serf and the unenfranchised. They were good landlords to their tenants, good cultivators of their demesnes, great patrons of architecture, of sculpture, and of painting, educators of the poor in their schools, healers of the sick in their hospitals, great almsgivers to the poor, freely hospitable to travellers: they continued constant in their religious services; but, in their housing, clothing, and diet, they lived (if I may so say) the life of temperate gentlemen rather than of self-mortifying ascetics. At this period we find that, from the gradual departure from primitive monastical austerity, there led to a series of endeavours to revive the ancient discipline. The names of various subdivisions of the Benedictine order will recur to the reader, such as the Cistercians, the Carmelites, the Premonstratensians, the Carthusians, the Augustines, and others of lesser note. We



must decline all attempts of any historical sketch of these bodies, the origin of which is very nearly alike—having their rise in the popular disrepute which the parent institution had fallen through increased wealth and its departure from primitive austerity. Say, then, that some young monk of enthusiastic disposition, disgusted with the laxity and, may be, the vices of his brother monks, flies from the monastery, and betakes himself to an eremitical life in some adjoining forest or wild mountain valley. Gradually a few men of like earnestness assemble around him. He is at length induced to permit himself to be placed at their head as their abbot; requires his followers to observe strictly the ancient rule, and gives them a few directions of still stricter life. The new community becomes famous for its virtue; the Pope's sanction is obtained for it; its followers assume a distinctive dress and name; and take their place as a new religious order. Such, we may assume, is an epitome of the history of these bodies whose names I have just enumerated: they all sprang out of the Benedictine order; retaining the rule of St. Benedict as the ground-work of their several systems, or if departure was introduced, of so trivial a nature as need not be described.

I must here add a brief notice of the ALIEN PRIORIES. These were cells of foreign abbeys, founded upon estates which English proprietors had given to foreign houses. After the expenses of the establishment had been defrayed, the surplus revenue, or a fixed sum in lieu of it, was remitted to the parent house abroad, chiefly in Normandy and Brittany. There were about 120 of these. Edward I., Edward II., and again Edward III., temporarily

availed themselves of these revenues when at war with France. Henry IV. did the same; and, finally, at a Parliament holden at Leicester in 1414, in the second year of Henry V., they were formally dissolved, and their possessions devoted for the most part to religious and charitable uses.

That these several measures were popular with Parliament and people we can readily admit: the whole tenor of our foreign policy (if I may so express myself) even at that day being one of extreme jealousy of Papal interference.

“No Italian priest shall tithe or toll in our dominions,”

was no idle boast: that memorable protest against the assumptions of Rome embodied in the Constitutions of Clarendon,\* and some of the provisions of Magna Charta being instances of this feeling.

A new class of devotees must here have a passing notice: I mean the MENDICANT FRIARS, known most frequently by the name of Franciscans and Dominicans. Their aim was to excel the monastic bodies in the performance of active religious duties among mankind; and with this view their houses were built in or near the great towns. Acting as home missionaries, their zeal was untiring; as students, their application to learning was severe; and as an indication of their attachment to science, we may add that in a short time the professorial

\* A royal palace near Salisbury. Scarcely a fragment of this once renowned building remains. The writer visited the spot a few years ago, and was pleased to note that the proprietor, Colonel Bathurst, had caused a tablet to be affixed to the remains of a rampart, recording the many memorable events which had been there enacted.

chairs of most of the universities of Europe were monopolised by members of these bodies. Of this class England boasts her Roger Bacon ; and honourable mention of them as scholars, painters, and philosophers is to be found in the literary annals of every part of Europe. Their zeal and proficiency in learning and theology, contrasted with the like attainments of the regular monastic bodies, tended sadly to the disparagement of the latter ; while the labours of Wickliffe, then attracting considerable attention, assisted materially to cause the institution to decline in general estimation.

During the disastrous wars of the houses of York and Lancaster we have little mention of this institution ; its members and its property appear to have been respected by both belligerents. Doubtless, in that sad and lamentable period of our country's history, when in very truth brother was confronted in battle array with brother, and parent with son,—when war and desolation overspread this fair land,—these sanctuaries offered an inviting retreat to many stained with crime and overwhelmed with remorse : where amid solemn associations and unbroken solitude the passions would be calmed, the force of habit subdued, and an entire new train of thinking induced. Or, again, when afflictions were so overwhelming, that they left no relief in the mind for anything else than to enjoy its own melancholy in silence, the gloomy severities of these places were really a relief. Many a courtier and many a warrior, sick of the sad scenes of which they were participators,—of the horrid recollections of Tewkesbury,—of Barnet, and of Towton, would long for and eagerly avail themselves of some quiet cell, where

they might shroud their grey hairs, and lose sight of the follies with which they had been too much tainted.

But we must bring this historical sketch to a close : The reign of Henry VII. finds the institution becoming more and more *effete* ; and the events of the subsequent reign now begin to loom. In the early part of Henry VIII.'s reign, Wolsey, then in the plenitude of power, contemplated a general visitation of the monasteries with a view to their increased usefulness, but was prevented by his sudden reverse. And now we come to their suppression. In the year 1535 the King, having resolved to break with the Pope, appointed, through Mr. Secretary Cromwell, a commission to undertake the visitation of all the religious houses, about 1500 in number, with their cells and hospitals. This commission executed its task with incredible celerity ; "the King's command was exceeding urgent;" and in ten weeks they presented their report. The small houses they represented to be full of irregularity and vice ; while, say they, "in the great solemn houses, thanks to God, religion was right well observed and kept up." The records of the Parliamentary debate on the presentation of this report were destroyed in the subsequent reign of Mary ; but Latimer, in one of his sermons, though the statement is probably over-coloured, tells us that when it was first read the enormities described were so great and abominable that there was nothing but cries of "down with them—down with them." The Act of Parliament for the suppression of the lesser houses was promptly introduced. The preamble, which is rather lengthy, recites that many visitations had been made in the 200 years preceding, but

had totally failed of success : that fraud, neglect of duty, illegal division of profits, dishonest administration of lands, neglect of hospitality, simony, and profligacy existed, to the displeasure of God and the great infamy of the realm : that reformation was seen to be hopeless : that of the truth of the report of the King's commissioners there could be no doubt : that God would be better pleased to see the possessions of such houses, now wasted in evil, applied to better purposes : and it then enacted that all houses having incomes of less than £200 per annum should be given to the King, and the monks to be distributed among the larger monasteries or pensioned abroad : that all debts whether of the houses or the brothers individually should be carefully paid ; and that a few of the abbeys which had been reported as free from stain should be permitted to survive. This act speedily became law ; and the turn of the larger houses shortly followed. They were not suppressed forcibly, but they were induced to surrender. The patronage of most of the abbacies being in the King's hands, or under his control, he speedily effected his object either by threats or cajolery ; and in the case of some abbots—those of Reading, Glastonbury, and St. John's, Colchester, who were altogether intractable, he disposed of by hanging as traitors. The accommodating abbots and monks were rewarded with bishopricks, livings, and pensions ; and the remainder were turned adrift to dig, to beg, or to starve. Such was the end of monastic life in England. Connected with the later events of the history of Monachism in England, the visitation of monasteries, and their final suppression, I would refer the reader to a valuable

contribution to historical literature recently published by the Rev. Mr. Froude, of Oxford, entitled "The History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Ann Boleyn."

I fear, my friends, I have been rather prolix in the preceding part of this Essay; bear with me, however, in the attempt to enter upon the more immediate object of our inquiry: the ECONOMY, by which I mean the arrangements connected with the every-day life of these interesting sons of the past.

And first, of the buildings which compose the fabric of a monastery. The nucleus of a monastery was the cloister court, a quadrangular space of green sward, around which were arranged the cloister buildings, viz.: the church, the chapter house, the refectory, and the dormitory. The court was called the Paradise—the blessed garden in which its inmates passed their lives of holy peace. The abbot's lodging was usually a detached house, similar in most respects to the cotemporary unfortified houses of laymen of similar rank and wealth. The extent and internal arrangements of course varied according to the wealth and importance of the monastery. As an instance familiar perhaps to many of you, I may mention that the hall of the abbot of Fountains was divided by two rows of pillars into a centre and aisles, and that it was 170 feet long by 70 feet wide: nor would this extent be disproportionate to the requirements incident to the position of the occupant: on great feast-days, royal visits, installations, &c., we have it recorded that the abbot of one of the greater houses would give a feast to three or four thousand persons.

The *Infirmary* also appears to have been generally detached. This department had its own offices, kitchen, refectory, chapel, and dormitories, forming a complete little separate establishment.

The *Hospitium*, or Guest-house, also was usually detached, and contained the like apartments and offices of the *Infirmary*. This important appendage to a monastic establishment deserves a more special notice: open to all ranks and estates, the entertainment offered was not inferior to that of any place in England, for the excellence of the diet, the cleanliness and neatness of the furniture, and the constant attention to every want; whilst, at the same time, no one was required to depart so long as he continued honest and of good behaviour. And what a contrast between the *Hospitium* and the *Cloister*! here a crowd of people of every degree—nobles and ladies, knights and dames, traders with their wares, minstrels with their songs and juggling tricks, monks and clerks, palmers, friars, beggars—bustling about the court, or crowding the long tables of the hall; and a few paces off, the dark-frocked monks, with faces buried in their cowls, pacing the ambulatory in silent meditation, or sitting at their meagre refection, enlivened only by the monotonous sound of the novice's voice, who is reading a homily from the lectern.

The other buildings were the *almonry*, the *officina* or work-shops, the *scriptorium* or writing-room, *granaries*, *bake-house*, &c., which do not require any particular mention.

The Church, of course, was always the principal building of a monastery. Of the abbey churches which es-

caped the despoiling hands of the first reformers, some of which were subsequently made into cathedral churches of new Bishoprics, we may mention, as equal to the cathedrals of the secular branch, the glorious edifices of Beverly, Gloucester, Christ Church (Oxford), and Peterborough, which were originally Benedictine abbey churches; Ripon, Westminster, Southwell, St. Alban's, also the churches of regular bodies; while the ruins of Netley, Fountains, Tintern, St. Mary's (York), and I know not how many more, attest the zeal, the piety, and the constructive skill of these old monks, the "wise master-builders," and "restorers of waste places" of a day long since departed.\* In contemplating the marvellous construction, the adaptation to the end proposed, the almost imperishable handiwork, and still unsurpassed beauty of the decorations of these monuments of their reverence to the Great Architect, we may almost conceive the sublime prayer of the wise man to be thoroughly realized:—

"Thou hast commanded me to build a temple upon the holy mount, and an altar in the city wherein Thou dwellest, which Thou hadst prepared from the beginning.

"And wisdom was with Thee, which knowest Thy works, and knew what was acceptable in Thy sight, and right in Thy commandments.

"O send her out of Thy holy heavens, and from the throne of Thy glory; that, being present, she may labour with me, that I may know what is pleasing to Thee."—*Wisdom of Solomon*, ix. 8, 9, 10.

\* Much interesting information on the history and antiquities of our cathedral churches may be obtained from a small hand-book on the subject, by the Rev. Mackenzie Wolcott, M.A.



We have now to go through the division offices in the monastic establishments. At the head of all was the *Abbot*, whose rule was almost-absolute. His great duty was to set the monks an example of observance of the rule, to keep them to its observance, to punish breaches of it, to attend the services in church when not hindered by his secular duties, to preach on holy days to the people, to attend chapter, and preach on the rules of the order, and to act as confessor to the brotherhood. The Abbots of the greater houses being barons, were sometimes thus involved in such duties as justices itinerant, peers of parliament, special ambassadors, and occasionally military leaders of their vassals. Under the Abbot was the *Prior*, and, in large houses, a *sub-Prior* or more, to the third or fourth degree, who assisted the Abbot, or filled his place when absent. The *Magister Operis* inspected the buildings. The *Eleemosynarius*, or almoner, distributed the alms, broken victuals, &c., every day at the convent gate to the poor. The *Pitantiarius* dealt out the pittances or allowances over commons on particular occasions. The *Cellarius* was the house-steward, he whom you see as the prominent figure in that well-known picture of Sir Edwin Landseer—so descriptive of our subject—"Bolton Abbey in the olden time." The *Rector Chori*, or chaunter, or precentor, who had the custody of the seal, of the chapter book, and the charge of the writing materials for the copying room and of the colours for the limners. Besides these, were the *Dean*, one or more; the *Treasurer* or *Burser*; the *Sacrista* or *Sexton*, the *Hospitarius*, who took care of the visitors; the *Infirmarius*, the resident leech or medical man;

*Cooks, Gardeners, Porter, &c.* In Canterbury cathedral, at the time of the dissolution, the names of thirty-one officers are affixed to the instrument of resignation and surrender.

The following rubrics of the leading rules observed in all Benedictine convents, I beg to quote (preserving the orthography) from a text book called the "*Concordia Regularium*," copied by Fuller in his "*Church History*."

"Let all at the sign given (tolling a bell) leave off their work, and repair presently to prayers. [This canon was so strict, that it provided *scriptores literam non integrent*; that writers (a great trade in monasteries) having begun to frame and flourish a text letter, were not to finish but to break off in the middle thereof.]\* Let those who are absent in public employment be reputed present in prayers. Let no monk go alone but alwaies two together. From Easter to Whitsunday let them dine alwaies at twelve, and sup at six; at other times fast on Wednesdays and Fridays till three (the 12 days of Christmas excepted) and every day in Lent till six. Let no monk speak a word in the refectory when at meals, but listen to the lecturer or reader.† Let the septimarians dine by themselves after the rest. [These were weekly officers, as the lecturer, servitors at the table, and cook.] Let those absent on business observe the same hour of prayer, and if purposing to return at night not eat abroad. [This canon was frustrated by the frequent dispensations of abbots.] Let the completory be solemnly sung at seven o'clock,

\* The reader will note that the sentences placed within brackets are comments by Fuller.

† "A custom still preserved in our Universities—the points of resemblance between colleges and monasteries may be seen in *Lel. It* V. 9, p. 122."

and when ended a strict silence be observed, and the monks retire to their beds. Let the monks sleep singly, if possible in one room, the young intermixed with the old, their cloaths on, and girt with their girdles, but without their knives by their sides. Let not the candle in the dormitory go out all night [for fear of sickness]. Let infants [all under fifteen years of age] incapable of excommunication, be corrected with rods. Let the offenders in small faults [coming after grace to dinner, breaking the earthen ewer in which they washed their hands, being out of tune in setting the psalm, taking any by the hand, deemed a preface to wantonness, receiving letters from or talking with a friend without leave of the abbot whereof the abbot is sole judge] be only sequestered from the table. [Such were to eat by themselves three hours after the rest, until they had made satisfaction.] Let the offenders in greater faults be suspended from table, and prayers. Let none converse (the keeper excepted) with any excommunicated, under pain of excommunication. Let incorrigible offenders be expelled, and an expelled brother, re-admitted\* on promise of his amendment, be set last in rank. Let every monk have two coats and two cowls [for exchange whilst one was washed], a table-book, knife, needle, handkerchief (which they wore on their left sides), a mat, blanket, rug, and pillow. [‘No down, feathers, nor flocks used by them, yea no linen worn on their bodies; the abbot also every Saturday was to visit their beds, to see if they had not shuffled in some softer matter, or purloyned some progge

\* “Which he could not be after a third expulsion. Ath. p. 142, col. 2, N. h. voc. *Monasterium exierit, &c.*”

for themselves.'] Let the abbot be chosen by the merits of his life and learning. Let him never dine alone, and when guests are wanting call some brethren up to his table. [His guests consisted of *convivæ*, neighbours, *hospites*, strangers, but not foreigners, *peregrini*, pilgrims from distant countries, and *mendici*, beggars relieved at the gate]. Let the cellarer be a discreet man, to give all their meat in due season; [but they were not always these discreet men, for our author tells us, that they were 'brave blades much affecting sæcular gallantry, and used to swagger with their swords by their sides like lay-gentlemen\*']. Let none be excused from the office of cook, but take his turn in his week, the abbot and cellarer excepted, [but 'our English abbies had afterwards cooks and under-cooks of lay-persons able to please the palate of Apicius himself.']. Let the cook each Saturday when he goeth out of his office, leave the linen and vessels clean and sound to his successors. Let the porter be a grave person to discharge his trust with discretion. In listening to no sæcular news, and, if casually hearing it, not to report it again; in carrying the keyes every night to the abbot, and letting none in or out without his permission."

The following sketch of the manner in which a monkish day was usually passed, I beg to extract from a small work written some sixty years ago by the Rev. Mr. Foscroke, who again appears to have been indebted to the larger work, intituled "Notitia Monastica" of Bishop

\* The faithful Jocelyn records that the countenance of Abbot Sampson's cellarer Walter had acquired, during the imbecility of Hugo, a certain rubicund hue, the preveining causes of which he leaves us to guess.

Tanner, a prelate of our church of the time of the first George, and a warm apologist for Monasticism:—

“ After *Mattins* (midnight) the convent assembled in the cloister, and went in that procession of two and two, which attended all their publick motions, to *Lauds* (three a. m.), after which they again returned to the Dormitory, till the Sacrist rang the bell for *Prime* (six a. m.) From September to Easter the Conventual Mass was sung, and the private services performed, between Prime and *Thirds* (nine a. m.) From Easter to September the chapter was held after Prime, and the conventual mass sung and the private services performed after Thirds. In the Chapter-house the monks took their seats, sitting in an inclining position, after having risen and bowed to the Prior as he passed. A religious service was then performed, and at the end of every prayer they said the Doxology [Lord have mercy upon us] and bowed to the east. The Precentor then called over the Obituary or Mortilloge, and the Prior said ‘requiescant in pace’ (may they rest in peace), to which the rest replied ‘Amen.’ The ‘*Loquamur de ordine nostro*,’ or let us speak of the affairs of the Order, was then proclaimed by the Prior, and the Novices retired. The business of the Convent immediately commenced, complaints against delinquents were formally brought forward, or they voluntarily acknowledged them, soliciting pardon or offering penance. This and some concluding ceremonies over, they rose and turned to the East; the Prior began a psalm, the rest made their response, and then bowed and withdrew, those excepted who staid for confession, penitential exercises, &c. [I here conjecture the sixth hour to have

been sung.] After which they proceeded to the cloister, to study, often to transcribe or illuminate—they were not to sit opposite to one another, and order was preserved by the Prior of the cloister (Prior claustralis).

“ At mid-day [after, as I conjecture, the celebration of *Nones*], the bell again rang, and having washed their hands, they placed themselves at their seats in the Refectory, their faces being turned towards the high table—upon the Prior's entrance they bowed as he passed, a psalm, commonly the ‘ Miserere ’ or 51st, was chanted, and a bell rung. Upon the bell ceasing, certain prayers and a grace were said, and they crossed themselves once. The Prior then gave the Benedicite to the reader of the week, the Monks turned round to the table, and at the end of the first verse they uncovered the victuals, which in most orders consisted, or ought to have consisted, of pulse made into a soup, or salt fish, the common food of hospitals ; eggs and fowls, and perhaps flesh, were often added by evasion of the rule. The dinner over, the Prior bowed to the reader, who immediately began the grace, upon which what victuals remained were covered over. The bell was then rung again, and the Monks rose and stood at the table, repeating the verse of a psalm after the chanter. This over, they bowed and went out two by two (the juniors first), singing a psalm, the right choir singing one verse, and the left another. They then proceeded to church to *Vespers*, and the celebration of any private services, after which they went to the cloister to read, or to the dormitory to sleep. Ceremonies nearly similar to those of dinner, attended their evening repasts, called collations ; after which the *Com-*

*plin* commenced, and on the conclusion of this service they were not to speak till the Prime of next day. The interval between Lucernarium and time of rest was filled up by the nightly readings or nocturns."

Of the EMPLOYMENTS of the inmates of these societies we must now speak. I have stated that the more menial offices connected with agriculture they evaded by the appointment of an inferior class of monks, the *Fratres Conversi* or lay brothers, pious but illiterate persons, who devoted themselves to the service of the religious. These never entered the choir, were not present at the chapter, and made the vows of constancy and obedience only. They were enjoined to hold a chapter of their own body in the evening, the times of hay and autumn harvest excepted, then to say complin and retire to rest. The teaching of the sons of noble families in grammar, rhetoric, and church music; practising horticulture; the tending of fish ponds; in some convents a few mechanical arts, glass painting, stone and wood carving, and the handicrafts connected with the wants of the society, may be severally enumerated as ordinary employments of the brotherhood. But the grand, the staple, occupation of the inmates was that of transcribing and illuminating manuscripts. On this topic I scarcely know how to condense my remarks to do justice to the learning, the skill, and the industry expended on this branch of monkish labour. In the great national and private libraries of our land are stored immense collections of these manuscripts; thousands are reposing on the dusty shelves of the Cottonian and Bodleian libraries; and yet these are a mere relic—an infinitesimal portion of the intel-

lectual productions of a past and obscure age. Bale, a contemporary of the Reformation and a strenuous opponent of the monks, thus deploras the loss of their books :—" Never (says he) had we been offended for the loss of our libraries (being so many in number, and in so desolate places for the most part), if the chief monuments and most notable works of our excellent writers had been reserved ; if there had been in every shire in England but *one* solemn library to the preservation of these noble workers . . . . . but to destroy all, and without consideration, is and will be unto England for ever a most horrible infamy among the grave seniors of other nations. A great number of those who had purchased or had bestowed upon them those superstitious mansions (continues he) reserved of those library books some to serve the vilest uses, some to scour their candlesticks, and some to rub their boots, some they sold to the grocers and soap-sellers, and some they sent over sea to the bookbinders, not in small numbers, but at times whole shipsful. I know (he adds) a merchantman that bought the contents of *two* noble libraries for 40s. price, a shame be it spoken. This stuff hath he occupied in the stead of grey paper for the space of more than these *ten years*, and yet hath *store enough for as many years to come*. A prodigious example is this, to be abhorred of all men who love their country as they should do." Quaint old Fuller too thus apostrophises on the same subject : " that there were volumes full fraught with superstition which, notwithstanding, might be useful to learned men, unless any one will deny apothecaries the privilege of keeping poisons when they can make antidotes of them ; but, besides these, what



beautiful bibles! what rare fathers! subtle schoolmen! useful historians! What pains-taking comments were here amongst them! what monuments of mathematics—all massacred together!"

I had intended when I originally planned this paper to have devoted a larger space to this monkish love of literature—this *bibliomania* of the middle ages, and had prepared materials with this view—I find, however, that the limits of a single address will not permit of that intention being carried out; and I must briefly describe the *modus operandi*—the manipulatory process—of this department. The precentor or chanter generally had the charge of superintending the monks thus employed, and in this capacity was styled the *armarian*, a word the etymology of which I am somewhat at a loss to explain. The place where the work was carried on was named the *scriptorium*. This was an apartment extensive and commodious, fitted up with forms and desks methodically arranged, so as to contain conveniently a great number of copyists. A monk well versed in the subject on which the book treated recited from the copy whilst the others wrote, so that on a word being given out it was copied by all. The multiplication of MSS. under such a system as this must have been immense,—being, in fact, a publication; but they did not always make books (*fecit libros*) as they called it, in this wholesale manner, but each monk diligently laboured at the transcription of a separate work. The *scriptorium* of a convent was frequently supported by resources solely applicable to its use: thus we read that at St. Edmundsbury the rents and soccage of two mills were applied to the purchase of

sheep-skins and materials for the writers and limners of that noted establishment.

To particularise these stores of literature would be unnecessary. I may mention, however, the noble library of Romsey, in Hants. A portion of an old catalogue of this library has been preserved, apparently transcribed about the beginning of the 14th century, during the troubled reign of Richard II. This portion—only a fragment of the original list—contains the titles of more than eleven hundred books, with the names of the donors attached. Somewhere about seven hundred of this goodly number were of a miscellaneous nature, and the remainder were principally books used in the performance of divine service. This collection gloried in the possession of the works of many of the fathers, histories of England, Normandy, and of the Jews, genealogies and deeds of the founders and benefactors of Romsey abbey, minor chronicles, and histories of scholastic divinity. Nor is science omitted: medicine, natural history, philosophy, mathematics, logic, dialectics, arithmetic, and music: besides a goodly list of the Latin and Greek classics.

Again, of the REVENUES of these institutions:—Besides the rentals of their farms or granges, manorial privileges, such as soke, stallage, or tolls of markets and fairs, estreats, escheats, mills for various purposes, and extensive presentations to benefices may be mentioned. They were also in most cases exempt from all secular charges, as tithes, offerings, deodands, &c.; and in many cases from royal taxes. Their surplus productions were disposed of at fairs, or exchanged with those of other establishments, and in this view they may be said to have

materially assisted the early commerce of our land. Mention is made of tanyards and dealing in cloth and wool as sources of wealth ; and, I may add, small fees arising from the loan or use of the stocks or ducking-stool, considerably kept always at hand. As careful cultivators and graziers, their revenues would rapidly increase. Removed from the temptation to expend their resources in attendance at court or costly retinues, their wealth would rapidly accumulate, while but little would be required for the coarse and scant clothing and frugal and rustic fare of the monks ; and thus they had enough for plentiful charity and unrestricted hospitality, the surplus being expended in the adornment of those magnificent buildings I have just alluded to, the very ruins of which are even now among the architectural glories of our land.

A word or two touching their AMUSEMENTS ; for at times even the monkish yoke would press more easily, and the self-imposed burden would be wisely lightened. Falconry and the chase afforded to the abbot, and by permission to the monks, the most lordly recreation of the time. Bear-baitings and cock-fighting we fear were not unknown to them, for we read in the records of the Priory of Bicester a gift of 4d. to the bear ward of the convent. Itinerant jugglers were hospitably entertained, and doubtless repaid the obligation by the exposition of their tricks. Mysteries or sacred dramas, which by the way originated with the monks, were produced periodically at the twelve festive days of Christmas ; and at the same time the well-known procession of the boy bishop and chorister boys, amid unchecked glee and roystering mirth,

contributed to break through the dull and monotonous routine of cloister austerity.

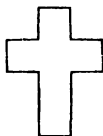
To conclude: while admitting the mistaken zeal, the infirmities, and even the vices of this body,—while expressing our thankfulness for this fairer age of liberty and light,—may not, I submit, something be advanced in favour of these institutions during the barbarous ages in which they flourished? Though productive of superstition and a prostration of mind and body, can we doubt that, through that thick night which once involved this western hemisphere, they, almost unaided, spread the glimmering of a feeble ray of knowledge,—that spirit of inquiry, directed by them to unravelling the dreams of Duns Scotus or Thomas Aquinas, earning for some of them the names “the subtle,” or the “angelic-doctors,” would doubtless, if properly directed, have gone far in philosophy; and it only failed inasmuch as such inquiries were beyond the objects of the human powers. However, there were not wanting some, even in the darkest ages, whose names will ever be remembered with pleasure by the lovers of science. Here, to use the eloquent words of a fair apologist,\* “were the sacred records of divine truth preserved, like treasure hid in the earth in troublous times, safe, but unenjoyed. Here were Homer and Aristotle obliged to shroud their heads from the rage of Gothic ignorance.” I may here add that a copy of the Pandects of Justinian, that valuable relic of Roman law, which first gave to Europe the idea of a more perfect jurisprudence, and gave to men a relish for a new and

\* Mrs. Barbauld. See *Miscellaneous Works and Letters*.

important study, was discovered in a continental monastery. Most of the classics were recovered by the same means; and to this it is owing, to the books and learning preserved in these repositories, that we were not obliged to begin anew, and trace every art by slow and uncertain steps from its first origin. Here was afforded almost the only instruction to youth. "Here took refuge the Muses, with their attendant arts, though, it must be admitted, in strange disguise and uncouth trappings. Painting illuminated a missal; Statuary carved a Madonna or a crucifix; Eloquence made the panegyric of a saint; and History composed a legend. Yet still the Sisters Nine were not wholly entranced; they breathed, and were ready at a happier period to emerge from obscurity with all their native charms and undiminished lustre."\* Here, too, in these days of feudalism—of lord and vassal—would a practical lesson be taught to check the excessive regard paid to birth: a man of the meanest origin and most obscure parentage was at liberty (as in the case of abbot Sampson, before alluded to) to aspire to the highest offices and dignities of the church: Pope Sextus V., originally a cloister monk, is not a solitary instance of a man, by industry and personal merit, raising himself to a level with the most renowned kings and kaisars. As patrons of learning, dispensers of hospitality, living embodiments of the moral virtues and christian graces, binding up the wounds of the strangers, releasing the captives, checking with the mildness and sanctity of religious influences the savage fierceness of

\* Mrs. Barbauld.

the age; let these the brighter—as in truth they were the more general—aspects of monastic life, be dwelt upon and imitated. Let us hope that with these institutions the world was better than it would have been without them; and that HE who knows how to bring good out of evil has made them, in their day, subservient to some useful purpose. Farewell! ye once venerated seats. Farewell! ye self-denying brotherhood! while WE are thankful for privileges *not* vouchsafed unto you, may the contemplation of the sad calamities which finally overwhelmed you, be a warning and a lesson not lost upon us. Whether, in exploring your ruins, or in studying your history, in imitating your ingenuity, or in perusing your legends, let us ever remember that not with impunity are privileges to be contemned or obligations to be violated: that where much is given much is required; that, as with you, ye sons of the past, so will it fare with all who forget, or neglect or pervert the mission they are called upon to fulfil: “as we sow, so shall we reap”. “Righteous art Thou, O Lord; just and true are all thy judgments!”



[The principal sources whence the Author derived the materials for the foregoing remarks, were "Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*;" "Fuller's *Church History*;" Froude's *History of England*;" "Fosbroke's *British Monachism*;" "Varty's *Bibliomania in the Middle Ages*;" "Raine's *Life of St. Cuthbert*;" and various articles connected with the subject to be found scattered through the entire series of the "*Gentleman's Magazine*." For a more extended knowledge of the subject the reader is referred to "Hallam's *Works*;" "Winkle's *Cathedrals*;" "Dr. Ullathorne's *Rationale of the Rule of St. Benedict*;" "Grose's *Antiquities*;" "Dugdale's *Monasticon*;" the *Publications of the Camden Society*, and of the several local antiquarian bodies now established; and the valuable series of early *British Chronicles* now issuing under the auspices of the *Master of the Rolls*.]



## LECTURE II.

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### Trade Guilds : their Objects and Government.

**Y**OU were pleased, my friends, to express a wish at the conclusion of the reading of my former paper on "*The Monastic Institutions of the Middle Ages*," that, should an opportunity be presented, I would extend the inquiry, or contribute to your series of Essays another of a somewhat similar character; reproducing to you relics and fragments and records of days long since passed away; having the same object in view—spending an hour not unprofitably, and may be awakening a desire to know more of a subject, of necessity, on this occasion but superficially treated.

In pursuance then of this wish, I have prepared the present essay, to which I have given the title presented to you, which may be considered as an abstract or brief sketch of the second important development of the Associative Principle in the Middle Ages; reserving for another opportunity, should such be your pleasure, a similar



inquiry into the third and remaining aspect of the same principle, as presented in the early *Military Brotherhoods* of the same period.

No uninteresting chapter in the annals of our commerce, and I may add of our national greatness, is that which treats of the birth and early development of trade and manufactures, and of the social and political economy under which they struggled into existence—a chapter in which the subject of our present inquiry, “The Trading Guilds of the Middle Ages” will be found to be most intimately connected. To this day the names, and in some cases a portion of the functions of these early societies exist. In London, more especially, the stately tokens of ancient honour still belong to them, with remnants of ancient wealth and patronage and power. Their charters, or such fragments of them as the mildew or vermin have spared, may still be read by the curious. Possessors of broad lands, of church preferments, surrounded by almost regal insignia, and at all times intimately associated with the honour and prowess of the realm, these associations may well claim from the annalist something more than a passing notice: they are all which now remain of a vast organization which once penetrated the entire trading life of England—an organization set on foot to realize that most necessary (if most difficult) condition of commercial excellence under which man should deal faithfully with his brother, to realize the desideratum that all wares offered for sale, of whatever kind, should honestly be what they pretend to be. These associations may not inaptly be compared to the then military organization of the country; as so many

industrial regiments quartered in every town, each with their own self-elected officers, whose duty was to exercise authority over all persons professing the business to which they belonged; who were to see that no person undertook to supply articles which he had not been educated to manufacture; who were to determine the prices at which such articles were to be sold; above all, who were to take care that the common people really bought at shops or stalls what they supposed themselves to be buying; that cloth put up for sale was true cloth, of honest texture and lawful lengths; that leather was sound and well tanned; that wine was pure, and the measure just; in short, who were to look to it that in all contracts between man and man for the supply of man's necessities, what we call honesty of dealing should be truly and faithfully observed. An organization for this purpose did once really exist in England, and generally throughout Europe; really trying to do the work which it was intended to do. In London, as the metropolis, a central council sat for every branch of trade, and this council was in communication with the highest officials of the crown, and not unfrequently with royalty itself. Composed of the most experienced and respectable members of the profession, the office of this council was to determine prices, fix wages, arrange the rules of apprenticeship, and discuss all details connected with the business on which legislation might be required. Further, this council received the reports of searchers—an office preserved in some of our old towns where the names of trade companies are still retained—high officers taken from their own body, whose business was to in-

spect, in company with the mayor or some other civic dignitary the shops of the respective traders; to receive complaints, and to examine into them.\* In each provincial town where these trade guilds existed, local councils sat in connection with the municipal authorities, charged with like duties,—and were, if need required, the medium of communication between the privy council or the crown, forwarding memorials, and proclaiming as law the statutes framed to meet such delinquencies or evasions as might require legislative interference. No person was allowed to open a trade or commence a manufacture, either in London or the provinces, unless he had first served his apprenticeship; unless he could prove to the satisfaction of the authorities that he was perfect in his craft; and unless he submitted as a matter of course to their supervision.

To an historical sketch, with a few details of the practical working of these Guilds,—institutions which for some centuries exercised so important an influence over our national fortunes—which laid the foundation of our commercial greatness,—which more than any other

\* That this power was really beneficial, and therefore necessary to such companies as had it not, is evident from the petition presented to the Court of Aldermen by the Wax-Chandler's Company in the reign of Edward III., wherein they speak feelingly of their craft being "greatly slandered of all the good folk of the said craft and of the city, for that they have not masters chosen and sworn of the said craft, as other crafts have, to oversee the defaults which be in their said crafts,"—the request being granted of naming four searchers. We further find their bye-laws providing "that no wax-chandler of the said craft make any torches, tapers, &c., nor none other manner of chandlerie of wax mixed with rosin and coke, but of good wax and wick." And further, for the discovery of the wrong-doers it was ordained that every chandler was to have a mark, "and to set it to torches, torchetts, and tapers which he maketh."

agency gave the character of truthfulness, of honesty, and of probity to the dealings of our early merchants, craftsmen, and adventurers; institutions which still exist, though, as I have just said, in shorn and diminished proportions, amongst us, but exercising by a law of moral reaction more influence on the commerce of *our own* day than an hasty inquiry might suggest; institutions whose teachings neither the statesman nor the moralist will ignore; to such sketch, mingled with such incidents as a very limited opportunity has enabled me to collect, your attention is respectfully solicited.

To a very remarkable custom, or political institution of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, must be ascribed the origin of Trade Guilds, so named from the Saxon verb *gildan*, to pay or contribute. The political institution I allude to was that known by the name of *Frankpledge*, or mutual responsibility—an institution long since passed into disuetude, but the name of which, with perhaps some shadow of its former meaning, is preserved and periodically brought to our notice in the summonses and other documents of those remnants of feudalism—our present baronial courts. Such a custom, in the judicial economy of the age, though appearing to us of the present time as stringent and even intolerable, was perhaps inevitable. In an age when the royal authority was distant and weak,—when the people were characteristically addicted to lawlessness and outrage,—when private revenge was traditionally, if not legally, sanctioned,—when most crimes were redeemable by a pecuniary composition,—when violence was too common to excite surprise: in such a state of society *individual* responsibility

was obviously inadequate to afford sufficient security to outraged law and social order. The only reasonable remedy was to throw the burden of reparation on the community in which the offender dwelt; to make all responsible for the crime of any individual amongst them. This system of frankpledge will be best explained to you by noticing its gradual development: at first it appears to have involved no more than the mere obligation of producing a delinquent at a given time; but as this was found insufficient—as the punishment of the offender did not effect his neighbours or kindred, who, in fact, were always his neighbours, the next step was to force the kindred to stand security for the payment of any pecuniary mulct in which he was convicted; hence they became interested in his good conduct, in his continuance amongst them, and in the integrity, the safety, and the improvement of his property. Frequent allusions are made to this custom, and successive alterations or ameliorations in its provisions are to be found in the laws of our early Saxon kings, for a further account of which I beg to refer you to perhaps the most accessible source of information—a work in most of our popular libraries—“Hallam’s History of the Middle Ages.”

The earliest Guilds, the precise date of the establishment of which we have unfortunately no authentic account, but of which these mutually responsible societies were doubtless the *nuclei*, appear to have had for their object the better carrying out the primary duties and obligations of social life, such as common defence against disturbers of the peace and property, the prosecution of offenders, mutual relief in poverty, and more particularly

for obtaining the rites of the church during sickness and after death, for decent sepulture, and for securing masses for the repose of the souls of the deceased brethren. As a proof of their semi-religious character we generally find them taking the name and placing themselves under the more immediate protection of some of the holy Apostles, or of a popular saint, and obtaining the sanction and complying with the requirements of the nearest monastic establishment or the parish church. In fact we may say of these early Guilds that they differed but little from the several mutual guarantee societies and benefit clubs of the present day. I will here quote (altering the orthography) the rules of one of these associations existing in Norwich in the 13th century, which will serve to convey a tolerably good idea of the rest :—

“ If any one belonging to our association chance to die, each member shall pay one penny\* for the good of his soul, before the body be laid in the ground. If he neglect it, he shall be fined in a triple sum. If any of us fall sick within the distance of sixty miles, we engage to find fifteen men who may bring him home ; but if he die first, we will send thirty men to convey him to the place in which he desired to be buried. If he die in the neighbourhood, the steward shall enquire where he is to be interred, and shall summon as many members as he can, to assemble, attend the corpse in an honourable manner, carry it to the minister, and pray devoutly for the soul. Let us act in this manner, and we shall truly perform the duty of our confraternity. This will be honourable

\* Then considerably more than double its present value.

to us both before God and man ; for we know not who among us may die first ; but we believe that, with the blessing of God, this agreement will profit us all, if rightly observed."

The ample provision subsequently made through the liberality of the church, the monarchs, the great barons, and not least by the traders of the day, for all spiritual wants, added to the increased respect for, and the improved administration of, the law, removed the necessity of these simpler forms of mutual support being preserved ; and we have reason to believe that they were either voluntarily relinquished, or transformed in some cases into trading or manufacturing societies. A few, however, are mentioned among the many bodies which ceased to have a corporate existence under the first confiscation of Henry VIII., *i. e.* the suppression of the smaller monastic and religious houses.

Trading Guilds are known to have existed in England prior to the Norman Conquest ; indeed a body of German merchants, known by the name of the " Merchants of the Steel Yard,"—a branch of the famous Hanseatic League, whose defensive union for the protection of commerce subsequently contributed so largely to European civilization, are known to have settled at their Guildhall at Dowgate, in London, as early as the ninth century. Tradition gives the Sadlers' Company of London a date nearly co-eval ; and in Winchester, York, Lincoln, Colchester, and perhaps in other towns, mercantile bodies are known to have been established, though not possessing either the civil or the mercantile influence they afterwards acquired. In the reign of Henry II., which you

remember dates from 1154, we find the Weavers' Company receiving a charter from that monarch; which charter only confirmed liberties previously enjoyed. In this patent, I may state that it is directed that if any weaver mingled Spanish wool with English, the fabric should be burned by the Lord Mayor: so jealous were our early princes of the reputation of this most valuable commodity. This Company, with its common seal, bearing the legend "Weave Truth with Trust," is recognized as the oldest in London. In the same reign besides the licensed, we find there were no less than eighteen other Guilds unlicensed, which were fined by the king in consequence. During this reign, we first find mention of the Jews as prominent traders, numbers of that nation having come over after the Conquest, thus giving an immense impulse to the trade of the country; their wealth, their habits of frugality, and entire devotion to business ensuring them sufficient protection from the ruling powers (notwithstanding occasional acts of popular violence and oppression), besides enabling them to obtain charters or licenses from the Crown,—bargains which the latter frequently found exceedingly convenient to engage in: as an instance of which I may mention that we find at a rather later date no less a sum than 4000 marks being paid to King John by a body of Jews for a trading charter.

Digressing a little from the immediate subject of our present inquiry, but which is in fact intimately connected with it, I will just glance at the trade of England during this long and upon the whole successful reign of Henry II.



A cotemporary writer, William Fitz Stephen, tells us, (but there is undoubtedly a little exaggeration in his statement),—that no city in the world now sent out its wealth and merchandise to so great a distance as the city of London; and he enumerates amongst its *imports* gold, spices, and frankincense from Arabia, purple cloths from India, palm-oil from Bagdad (these commodities being obtained chiefly through our commerce with the Venetians, then the chief traders of Europe), furs and ermines from Norway and Muscovy, arms from Scythia (probably meaning Hungary), and wines from France; woad for dying was also introduced, and occasionally corn, which, however, was at other times generally an article of export. Branches of industry, and export and import trade, were at this time thoroughly established in several other towns: local records informing us that Exeter was then a flourishing city, filled with opulent citizens; and Bristol is mentioned as having a great trade with Ireland, Norway, and other countries. Gloucester, Winchester, Chester, Dunwich in Suffolk, Norwich, Whitby, Lynn, Boston, with many other places, are mentioned as towns of trade; and Lincoln was peculiarly favoured by a canal of seven miles long, cut by Henry I. from the Trent to Witham, which enabled foreign vessels to come close up to the city. The *exports* from these various ports consisted chiefly of cattle and fish, especially of herrings and oysters, and “most precious wool.” Lead and tin were also sent abroad in great quantities, and perhaps hides, skins, and woollen cloths, though the trade in the latter article was as yet but very imperfectly practised. As these *exports* seem to have far exceeded in amount the *imports*,

the difference was no doubt made up to this country in money or bullion. So great indeed was the quantity of silver in the kingdom that it could afford to raise in the subsequent reign 70,000 marks (equal in weight to nearly £100,000 in our money) for the ransom of Richard I. The Flemings were the chief foreign traders who resorted to this country, and after them the French.

We now come to a more important era in the commerce and the fine arts of our country: the palmy period of our trading Guilds, from which date, without interruption to our own day, the prophet's glowing description of Tyrian enterprize and mercantile superiority may justly be transferred to Britain: "Her merchants became princes, and her traffickers the honourable of the earth." The reign of Edward III., the father, as he may almost be called, of English commerce, commencing 1327, gave birth to an entire reconstruction of the trading fraternities. Commerce now became, next to liberty, the leading object and solicitude of Parliament. "Far the greater number of our statutes," observes Mr. Hallam, "bear relation to this subject; not always well devised, (he continues,) or liberal, or consistent, but by no means worse in those respects than such as have been enacted in subsequent ages." From being merely *licensed*, the Guilds (or crafts, as they now became more generally called) became *incorporated*. Their privileges were recognized and confirmed, and in many instances increased by royal letters patent; a distinctive dress or *livery* was assumed\* (hence

\* An haberdasher and a carpenter,  
A webbe [weaver], a deyer, and a tapiser,  
Were alle yclothed in o [one] liverie  
Of a solempe and grete fraternite.—*Canterbury Pilg.*

the name, still preserved, of *livery* companies); all artificers and people of crafts and mysteries were now to attach themselves to their respective Guilds; and having attached themselves were not henceforth to use any other. The right of electing Members to Parliament was transferred from the wards of London to the trade companies—a most important influence in raising them to their subsequent power. The number of Crafts exercising municipal and parliamentary franchises during this reign had increased to forty-eight. The King himself condescended to become a brother in one of these societies—the Merchant Tailors, who were then the great importers of woollen cloth, which the King sought to make the staple manufacture of his own dominions, and in carrying out of which intention he was eminently successful. Individual merchants we find now taking rank with the feudal nobility. In this reign mention is made of William De-la-Pole, the founder of the old ducal house of Suffolk, reputed the greatest merchant in England, and of whom it is stated that on one occasion he lent his sovereign no less a sum than £18,500—an immense sum for the age. Again, if we are to credit honest old Stow,—and why should we not?—we find recorded that, in this same reign, Picard, a vintner, in the year of his mayoralty entertained at his house in the Vintry, Edward III., the Black Prince, the captive kings of France, Scotland, and Navarre, and presented them with handsome gifts. In the following reign—that of the unfortunate Richard II.—we find that Philpot, an eminent citizen and fishmonger, at a time when the trade of England was annoyed by privateers, hired and fitted out

at his own expense 1000 armed men, and despatched them to sea, where they took fifteen Spanish vessels with their prizes. The Merchants of the Staple, a powerful incorporated body, of whom I ought to have made mention of before—whose duties were to collect the staple commodities of the kingdom, such as wool, tin, leather, stock or cured fish, &c., into the staple towns, of which there were some nine or ten, so that the King's duties might be the more securely collected, and that foreign merchants might know where to find our chief products in abundance; and who also were the exporters of these goods—of this body it is recorded by Rymer that they advanced the monarch £4000. In the succeeding reign we find it mentioned that one Hinde, a citizen and skinner of London, lent to Henry IV. the sum of £2000; another citizen, John Norbury, is put down for a like sum; and the ever-to-be-remembered Whittington, mercer and citizen, stands a creditor to the monarch for half the amount just mentioned, whilst the most wealthy of the nobility gave only £500. During the fifteenth century commerce continued to be regularly and rapidly progressive, notwithstanding the unfavourable influences of the civil wars of York and Lancaster. The famous Cannings, of Bristol, under Henry VI. and Edward IV., had ships of 900 tons burthen; and in the reign of the latter we find many important commercial treaties made with foreign powers, and great opulence displayed among the sons of trade. The merchants of Calais (then the great staple or market for exported goods) alone lent their sovereign upon one occasion upwards of £40,000. The size and value of the different vessels employed at that time may

be estimated from a few notices found in public documents. Thus we read of a Newcastle ship of 200 tons valued at £400; of another from Hull with its cargo of cloth valued at £200; of a Falmouth barge laden with salt and canvass from Brittany valued at £333; of a Yarmouth vessel with salt, cloth, and salmon, valued at £40; and of a Lynn vessel, with her cargo, valued at £643. Under the regulations, and generally under the personal management of the members of our early guilds, was all this commercial activity carried on.

But I am afraid this sketch grows tedious: I must hasten through the few remaining years comprised within the not altogether agreed upon definition of the term "middle ages." The attention of Richard III. and his Parliament was a good deal directed to the subject of foreign trade, and several acts were passed, chiefly directed against foreigners (especially those of Italy), who had now got into their hands a great part of the internal trade of England. In this reign was set up the first printing-press in England—the honoured instrument in this great work being a member of a trade guild—William Caxton, citizen and mercer. From this important landmark in our social history the influence and *prestige* of these trading fraternities are observed to wane: the first parties to lose ground being the foreign merchants. Unchartered seats of industry, such as Manchester and Sheffield, were now rising into some importance, causing uneasiness to their elder sister-towns. The profound peace that England enjoyed under Henry VII.—a prince whose leading policy was to husband the national resources, to promote trade, and encourage maritime dis-

covery—was especially favourable to commerce ; but with this extension, the rigour and vigilance with which bye-laws affecting trade and manufactures were enforced, were found to be incompatible. Of the attempts to prop up the influence of these corporations by fresh statutes and trade regulations under subsequent sovereigns I shall not at present enter; neither can we notice the birth and growth of those more powerful and influential trading companies, such as the Turkey Company, the Russian Merchants, the Hudson's Bay Company, the Merchant Adventurers of Bristol, and, lastly, the East India Company. The chapters of our commercial history and of our maritime discovery to which these corporations properly belong, are probably familiar to most of you ; and forming, as they do, so important a link in the annals of our trade, ought to be carefully studied. Perhaps, then, I cannot conclude this imperfect sketch of early English industry better than by throwing out a friendly hint to the younger portion of our audience, to seek for fuller information on the subject, and pursue the inquiry through the various progressive stages that our commerce has gone through, resulting as it has—in this our day—in absolute and uncontrolled freedom—thrusting aside, let us hope, the antagonism of race, and creed, and language,—drawing men together,—and uniting all the civilized world in the bonds of peace.

I have hitherto confined myself too exclusively, perhaps, to a retrospect of the *commerce* of the period gone over in this historical sketch. Some notice must be taken of the progress in ART during the same period ; and to such of you as have had an opportunity of ex-

amining in detail the specimens of Mediæval Art in the late collection of Art Treasures in Manchester, and the similar department in the Sydenham Palace, I need but state that, even compared with the more classic and artistic states of Europe, England held an honourable position. Early in the reign of Edward III., to whom, as I have said, English commerce is so much indebted, we find the Goldsmiths' Company chartered, and compelled to keep shops openly in the High street of Cheap, or the King's Exchange, as it was then called, and that publicly, to the intent that others of the trade might inform themselves whether the sellers came lawfully by the gold and silver articles which they exposed for sale. At this time the goldsmiths were assisted by foreign artificers, principally from Germany, Holland, and the Netherlands. Amongst the early regulations of this Guild it is provided that its members should only employ one Dutchman "as shall be known for a cunning man and well-disposed, and none other "alicant" [*i. e.* foreign] servants, but to take Englishmen, and none but English apprentices." And further, amongst the miscellaneous entries in the books of this company is an account of a trial of skill between an English and Dutch goldsmith at the Pope's Head Tavern, Cornhill, in 1480, which resulted in the palm being awarded to the Englishman. The entry goes on to state that the vanquished foreigner, besides having to reimburse his competitor for the "gravinge," should pay to the winner a crane, with the appurtenances, in a dinner to be made at the trade hall to the wardens and all them that had any "entress" [interest] in this matter. In London then, as in many of our old

towns, the number of goldsmiths' shops were comparatively numerous, which must be accounted for from the practice then prevalent of the interchange of presents of plate, not only with the sovereign, but among the nobility and gentry. A reference to the inventories of noble families and corporations, or to the wills of the time, will furnish abundant instances of the encouragement given to the manufacture of gold and silver plate. The requirements for the ceremonial and offices of the church—ever striving to realize the worship of the Creator in the “beauty of holiness,” and aiming to present herself in a literal sense to a comparatively rude and chivalrous age as the “heavenly bride,” the “King’s daughter all glorious within”—these requirements then would find ample employment for the artistic skill of the age; and notwithstanding the destroying zeal of our early Reformers, sufficient specimens still remain to attest the piety and liberality, no less than the skill, of our early gravers, enchasers, and designers—worthy imitators of the divinely-inspired craftsmen of the church in the wilderness—Aholiab and Bazaleel—“artificers in whom were wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge to devise cunning works; to work in gold and in silver, and in brass; and in cutting of stones to set them, and in carving of timber, to work all manner of workmanship.”\*

Belonging to most of the Guilds of the period were also abundant specimens of early English art. Wardens and masters of the several crafts were wont to express their gratitude and good wishes to their fellows by presents generally of gold or silver plate, commemorating

\* Exod. xxxi., 3, 4, 5.



their connection with the fraternity; and in almost every instance beseeching the prayers of the brethren for the repose of their souls. At the time of the Reformation, however, all such pieces as had representations of saints upon them were ordered to be destroyed by Henry's commissioners. Thus, in the records of the Goldsmiths' Company we find that in 1547 the large silver figure of their patron, St. Dunstan, a very early specimen of English Art, fell a victim, and it was decreed, that "they should take the image of the seynte, and breke it, and turn it to the profit of the house." Also, "that the grete stendinge cuppe, with St. Dunstan on the top, should be likewise by them broken, and turned into plate." Time will not allow particular mention to be made of the treasures of art then deposited in the royal, monastic, and aristocratic cupboards of that age, and I will conclude this notice of early English Art with a quotation from a contemporary annalist, who remarks of London in the time of Edward VI.,—"It was beautiful to behold the glorious appearance of goldsmiths' shops on the south row of Cheapside, which in a course reached from the Old Change to Bucklersbury, exclusive of four shops only of other trades in all that space."

Akin to the art employed in the trade of the gold and silver smiths, I ought to mention that employed in the then requirements of war. In the costly armour and war harness then in use artistic skill was largely employed. Hence the importance of our Armourers, Bowyers, Lorimers, and Merchant Tailors, called in some of their earlier documents "Linen Armourers," from the quantities of cloth, linen, and wool employed

in strengthening, decorating, or quilting armour, surtouts, housings for horses, &c.

Confining, then, these our remarks and inquiries of these interesting institutions of the past to the period indicated in the title of this paper, we proceed to give you some account of their more striking features; and first we ought to mention their *semi-religious* character. Like the earlier associations to which I alluded at the commencement of this paper, we generally find these trade guilds assuming the name, and placing themselves under the especial protection of a popular saint;—Thus we have the names of the Blessed Virgin, the several Apostles, St. Thomas of Canterbury, St. Martin, St. Dunstan, with many others, adopted as the designation of these companies. A Chaplain was one of the regularly constituted officers of all the larger guilds;—and the day set apart for the commemoration of their patron saint was especially honoured. Costly presents were ever and anon being made by them to their parish church; or guild chapel; appropriate passages from the sacred pages were adopted as the legends or mottos of their common seals and arms—all bearing testimony that, in general, they had before them a seemly reverence for, and dependence upon, the Giver of all Good—that although zealous in business, they neglected not that merchandize “which is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.” The funeral obsequies of each individual were honourably performed, as a matter incumbent upon them as a body, and even at their common expense, if the estate of the defunct member was not sufficient to defray his funeral.

The instances of individual munificence under this head are abundant, not only in London, but in all our old towns. Need I mention that of the well-known Whittington, who founded in his parish a magnificent college (suppressed at the Reformation), with its master, four fellows, precentors, and choristers, and bestowed upon it the rights and profits of the church belonging to him,—or the princely magnificence of one of the Cannings, of Bristol, still an honoured name, to whom we are indebted for that glorious specimen of mediæval art—the Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, of that renowned city?

As a matter of course, the *Festivities* of these bodies attract a considerable share of attention. Let us go back to these old times of England, still preserved to us in songs and ballads as peculiarly claiming the epithet of “*Merrie*,” and well do these honest traders sustain the reputation given of their country by our earlier chroniclers. On the early dawn of the festival of the patron saint of the fraternity, we can, in fancy, see them preparing for the great work of the day, the election of the wardens and officers. The procession to church is formed. The civic authorities, the priors and regulars of the great local conventual establishments—the clerks and priests of the immediate district—numerous guests (perhaps including Royalty itself), and lastly the members of the company, which it is the business of the day to honour. They gain the church—they make their offerings—mass is performed. From church they return in the same manner to their hall, there to hold high festival. Extensive are the prepara-

tions for so numerous a company. The election of officers is completed,—the oath of office is administered, with an injunction that they shall swear that they will well and truly occupy the office; that they shall bring in no new customs, nor bind the commonalty of the said craft to any new charges, nor yet discharge any duty to their hurt; that they shall not lay down any of their good old customs, or acts written, without the consent of the said commonalty. And then takes place the dinner—and of this what shall we say that can adequately describe its variety, profusion, and costliness, or the skill with which it has been prepared? Barons of beef—the boar's head, a kingly dish—dishes of brawn—fat swans, cranes—fish I know not of what names or *genera*—made-dishes of the most colossal dimensions and elaborate composition—though to modern gourmonds perhaps of questionable ingredients. Then would follow some rude dramatic or allegorical entertainment, known at that day by the name of a “mystery,” giving in uncouth rythm, and pourtraying in fantastic tableaux, the history and beneficial purposes of the craft, or some well-known event recorded in the sacred page, or in popular legends. Minstrels assist in the general gala—the loving cup is passed round—the retiring master and wardens drink to the God-speed of the new master and wardens, who assume the badges of office, and are duly acknowledged by the fraternity—a holiday is promised to the apprentices, and the proceedings terminate with duly recording the events of the day in the company's registers. On the Sunday following the members of the craft were accustomed to attend in the same

manner in the same church, there to hear a solemn mass or requiem for the souls of the departed members of the fraternity; and at which mass the name of each brother was rehearsed and specially commended to the prayers of all. After which another but minor feast took place—some routine business was gone through,—and the annual solemnity was then over.

The *domestic government* of the craft—the chief duty of the newly-elected officers—must not be omitted. This comprised many parts, amongst which the ordinary matters of binding apprentices,—admitting freemen,—correcting the younger members of the craft, who (to the neglect of their business) had given themselves up to idleness and unlawful games; making advances of money to the poorer but fully competent brothers to start trade therewith; and to watch with jealous care that persons not free of the craft were precluded from engaging in it. Safe keeping of trade secrets was a matter most carefully enjoined and provided for. Preventing disputes or arranging differences among the members formed another important branch of the duties of the officers. The management and due control of the apprentices doubtless occupied a good share of their attention, as numerous sumptuary laws and regulations effecting them appear in the records of the London and other companies. And, not to be tedious, I will mention but one or two other, though very important, duties, of which I must not omit—that of Trade Searches—a duty, the revival of which has numerous advocates in our own day; and which has, in respect of some articles, been re-enacted with the most beneficial results in our

corporate towns. In the Grocers' Company of London we find that the wardens were bidden "to go and essayen weights, powders, confections, plaisters, ointments, and all other things belonging to the said company." The Fishmongers examined fish—the Vintners tasted wines, the Merchant Tailors examined cloth;\* and most of the other companies had like powers. In times of scarcity the companies of London undertook the supply of corn and coal to the poorer citizens at a moderate price; and the last duty of the officers of these companies that I shall enumerate was conducting the occasional correspondence between the Crown and the fraternity, whether the business in hand were a royal loan, or—what was much the same thing—a gift; or, as sometimes was the case, the arranging for the defence or honour of the nation,—for, remember, whenever any great public occasion rendered a pecuniary demand upon the companies reasonable, they always showed a liberality worthy of the Metropolis. Whenever armies were fitting out, their contingents formed a considerable item in the

\* We fear we cannot altogether acquit the websters and clothworkers of this, and even an earlier period, of a few of the tricks of their successors in our day. In *Piers Plowman's Vision* occurs a passage alluding to the "wracking" (racking, tentering, or stretching) of woollen cloth to the disadvantage of the buyer; and at a later period we have honest Latimer, who appears to have been acquainted with the passage alluded to, as he mentions same increase of tension, thus rating the manufacturers of his day. In a Sermon before Edward VI. (on Covetousness), he says :—"If his [the cloth-worker's] cloth be seventeen yards long, he will set on a rack, and stretch it with ropes, and rack it till the sinews shrink again, till he hath brought it to eighteen yards. When they have brought it to that perfection they have a pretty feat to make it thick again. He makes a powder for it, and plays the 'potticary. They do so incorporate it with the cloth, that it is wonderful to consider. Truly a good invention! . . . These mixtures come of covetousness: they are plain theft."

whole; and in periods of civil commotion they always could furnish a respectable force for their own and the city's defence, having armouries attached to their halls, with willing hearts and brawny arms to wield the pike, or bow, or bill: a proficiency in the use of these weapons being acquired not only by the ordinary athletic games then indulged in, but also by stated times set apart, and suitable arrangements made, for every citizen or "prentice bould" becoming practically a defender, if need be, of his King and his Fatherland.

Of these once-powerful and influential corporations, but a shadow of their former grandeur remains. True, we have still the Cutlers' Society of Sheffield, the Apothecaries' and the Goldsmiths' Companies of London, exercising a tolerably efficient control over the respective trades; but these almost solitary exceptions serve but to convey a deeper impression of the complete wreck of a once-mighty system. Considerable wealth and property still remain in possession of the present representatives of these companies, as well in our old corporate towns as in London: and it would be unfair to state otherwise than that as "trusteeships" for the honest disbursement of this wealth, the present management is unexceptionable. The disbursements comprise pensions to decayed members, the maintenance of almshouses, gifts of money to the poor, funds for the support of hospitals, schools, exhibitions to the universities, to the less-favoured of the clergy for lectureships and anniversary sermons, and so on through a goodly list; not omitting—what is perhaps one of the most valuable of their charities—the loans of different sums to young beginners in business, to an

amount and for a time sufficient to start them fairly in life with every expectation of a prosperous career. The celebration of what are termed "their chartered festivals" are still observed,—and I may add that it was mainly owing to some extravagances under this head, and a popular clamour resulting therefrom, that a Royal Commission was appointed a few years since to inquire into the powers, duties, management of the property, &c., of the London Companies, and to report thereon to Parliament; but which, as yet, has led to no practical result. These "chartered festivals," then, notwithstanding the magnificence of one or two of them, such as the Merchant Tailors, the Goldsmiths, and the Fishmongers, are not for a moment to be compared with those of their predecessors of the same locality. There may be eminent men amongst the guests, but no king sitting down, as Henry VII. once did "openly amongst them," says Stowe, "in a gown of crimson velvet of the fashion as a member." And how long even the "trusteeship" of this wealth and property may be left in the hands of the present holders it is hard to predict.

Thus, my friends, have I endeavoured to place before you, though I fear very incoherently and imperfectly, some account of the Trade Guilds of the Middle Ages—a subject belonging to a branch of study which, I am aware, has but little attraction for, and obtains but little echo in the heart of, the general public; but which, thanks to the various learned societies engaged in its prosecution, the painstaking researches of individual archæologists, and, I am happy to add, the assistance of



the Government, is gradually taking its proper position amongst the inquiries of our age.

I was, in the preparation of this paper, strongly tempted to offer at some length a plea for a kindly verdict for these interesting institutions of a by-gone day. I might have urged that they provided against undue competition—that they afforded a guarantee to the public and to themselves against quackery and deception;—that there was exhibited in them a perfect spirit of equality, combined with a due gradation of rank; each member regarding his fellow as a brother, and feeling that he was subject to no regulations but what had been framed for the interest of all, and which he might be called upon one day to supervise and administer;—that the apprentice looked up to the workman, and the workman to the master; that all regarded the council of administration with that respect which is due to talent when invested with authority, each acting under the conviction that his own safety was best insured by the joint co-ordination and mutual assistance of all. But upon these subjects I must not enter. If you feel inclined to smile at some of the puerilities which these early corporations exhibit, do justice to their honesty, their industry, their public spirit, and their munificence. If you are prepared to contend that the system was in direct contradiction to sound political and social economy—do so with charity, if not with hesitation. In this, our own day, when we are periodically subjected to convulsions in almost all branches of our commerce—when our Legislature and our Chambers of Commerce

are utterly powerless to devise or construct means to check the hideous and scandalous frauds daily exhibited in our bankruptcy and insolvent courts\*—when the very question “Is British commerce really sound at the core?” is asked in all seriousness—we may well pause when we feel disposed to break down the few remaining protective, or rather regulative, barriers left us by our forefathers. Rather let us whisper to ourselves, may not something worthy of imitation be gathered from the study of the characters of these honest and sturdy old traders; and may not some useful (though to our self-conceit unpleasant) lessons be gleaned from an examination into the modes and principles upon which they conducted their no inconsiderable commercial transactions; and really, my friends, I much fear that the result of such an inquiry, honestly and impartially gone into, would not be more damaging to our boasted superiority, than it would be condemnatory of that spirit of recklessness and imprudence which, unfortunately, is but too prevalent amongst us.

\* Written shortly after the commercial disasters in the autumn of 1857.



*[Amongst the authorities consulted by the author of the foregoing pages may be mentioned "Herbert's Account of the London Companies," "Knight's London," "Froude's History of England," "Hallam's Middle Ages," "Eccleston's English Antiquities," "The Gentleman's Magazine," and "Retrospective Review." The writer regrets that the facilities of availing himself of works of reference belonging to the subject here treated upon were exceedingly limited.]*



## LECTURE III.

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### On the Military Brotherhoods of the Middle Ages.

**W**E resume, my friends, although at a lengthened interval, our inquiry into the development of the Associative Principle in the Middle Ages; and having attempted to place before you the more prominent features—historical, economical, and traditionary—of the monastic bodies and the trading fraternities, we now purpose (treating the subject in manner as heretofore) to direct your attention to the third important aspect of this principle, viz. :—the rise and progress, the organization and economy of the great Military Brotherhoods of that period,—repeating the wish which we before expressed, that an hour may be not unprofitably spent, and an increased desire awakened in some of you to enquire more fully into a department of literature, upon which a large amount of labour, industry, and research are now being directed.

If my friends—more particularly such of you who were not present at the reading of the preceding papers of this

series—should object to the reproduction and portrayal of manners and of scenes which pertain to an age happily passed away, and which doubtless exhibits much that is barbarous and puerile, false in true morality, and unsound in political and economic science, let me in the outset remind you how much the state of society which we have now under review was mixed with spontaneous and independent good, and often corrected by it;—how much the misconduct of all parties was the result of less happy circumstances than those in which the objectors are placed;—how much the contemplation of these more ennobling virtues which ever and anon present themselves to the enquirer tends to foster a spirit of comprehensive patriotism, by making us proud of our country, and preserving in ever-enduring blazon whatever was praiseworthy in the national character and history. Who can tell the effect of those great results—manifested in the monastic, the trading, and the military organization of the MIDDLE AGES on the days in which our lot is cast? Did they not give life to Chatterton, and Wordsworth, and Scott; and do they not still continue to inspire, and teach, and leave an impress upon the noblest works of the master minds of the present day? The chivalric imagination still waves its magic wand over us. We love to link our names with the heroic times of Europe; and the armorial shields and crests of our nobility and gentry confess the pleasing illusions of the institution which we have this evening undertaken to bring before you.

No useless nor idle occupation, then, is it for us to be thus employed in “remembering the days of old,

and considering the years of generations that are past." If old Time has robbed us many things, there still remain hoards of treasure in that cave which men call the "PAST," and which requires but the mattock of patient research to lay open. Let us then enter upon the discovery, and bring up from these depths the forgotten records of an age passed away, and inventions and institutions long since sunk into oblivion; and in this enquiry let us remember that these institutions and records convey to us the objects of the joys, the sorrows, the hopes, and the strivings of men of like passions with ourselves. In reading the old tales which happily survive, and which tell us so much of the institution we are to-night considering, and so much of the manners, the apparel, the solemnities, and the recreations of the Middle Age, let us remember that they are the same which in days of old were carried by wandering minstrels to court and camp,—the same which were told amidst the rapt attention or the fierce applause of knights and 'squires stretched on the greensward in the summer, or lounging on the rushes before the great hall fire in the wearisome winter time. And is it not pleasant for us to think, as we read some stirring romance of old times—the Morte d'Arthur, the Adventures of Sir Guy of Warwick, or of Sir Lancelot du Lake, or descending to a later period, some of the exciting chronicles of the Crusades, that may be the same tale, told it is true in a more uncouth rythm, "hath," as old Gower sings—

"————— been sung at festivals,  
On ember eves and holy ales  
And lords and ladies of their lives  
Have read it for restoratives."

Our object on the present occasion being to treat of the Military Organizations or Brotherhoods of the Middle Ages, we must allude in a passing manner to the more general military characteristics of the age in which these institutions originated and flourished ; and must confine our review of them in the main to the aspect they presented in our own country.

All of you are aware that the military spirit and the military achievements of that period are ever associated with the name and with the laws and the regulations of an institution bearing the name of *chivalry*,—an institution of which so much is preserved to us in the traditions, the literature, and even the forms and names and obligations pertaining to it. It is perhaps impossible to mark the exact time when the various predisposing or prevenient agencies existing in Europe moulded themselves into the institution bearing the general name of CHIVALRY ; and by what means the amalgamation of the secular and religious elements was effected we know not. "Antiquity," says Lord Bacon, "loveth to muffle up her head ;" and perhaps in no instance is the remark more obvious than in the case of the institution before us. Prior to the Christian era something like it prevailed amongst the northern nations of Europe : the spirit of clanship, devotion to and reverence of the female character, and performing acts of service when affection and duty commanded them, are features known to have existed in German and northern nations, and even attracted the attention and admiration of Roman historians and satirists. By common consent the date of the establishment of knighthood or chivalry is placed somewhere

between the ninth and eleventh centuries. Many chivalrous principles and customs were known to the Anglo-Saxons, and affected in some degree the somewhat stolid character of that nation. But to the *Normans* we are mainly indebted for the elements which fully developed this institution, and fashioned it, by the energy brought to work, into the fair and noble system which it speedily acquired under them. The adventurousness of knight-hood comported well with a people who, leaving the inhospitable shores of Scandinavia, had impressed their conquests on France, Italy, and even Greece. The Norman nation was in fact one vast brotherhood, and therefore it was natural for them to nourish the principles of chivalrous fraternity. At the Conquest, then, chivalry became established as part of the national constitution. We read that William divided the newly-conquered country into sixty thousand knights' fees, with the tenure of military possession. The clergy, as well as the laity, were compelled to furnish armed knights, as the price of their possessions, when the king went against his enemies; and as there was constant occasion for them, chivalry became a military profession. In the following reign we find that William Rufus invited to the court the most adventurous cavaliers from every country; for as his father effected the subjugation of Harold not merely for the feudal force of Normandy, but by hired soldiers, it was the natural policy of the Norman line of kings to attach to their persons valiant men who were not connected by ties of kindred with the vanquished. Under the reign of the first Henry the principles and feelings of chivalry were firmly established in England, and gave



the tone and character to our foreign military warfare. In the following reign, that of Stephen, we find the knightly character had an important effect on England. As he was deserted by his barons, he called in foreign cavaliers to assist him in resistance to his competitor, the Empress Maude. These services were rewarded with grants of estates, and thus a new order of nobility arose to shake the arrogance of the old; and new feelings, opinions, and manners became blended with English habits. The entire reign of the lion-hearted Richard is, as you all remember, a series of knightly tableaux. It must be considered to have reached its palmiest day in the reign of Edward III., and through succeeding reigns we find it occupying a more or less conspicuous part, until we come to the disastrous period of the civil wars between the houses of York and Lancaster. These wars operated fatally upon the noble order of knighthood; and a ruthlessness of spirit was throughout them manifested that mocked the gentle influences of chivalry. At this period was introduced into England the art of Printing, and I may remind you that one of the earliest works issued from the English Press was a work written or compiled by Caxton himself on this subject, entitled "On the Order of Chivalry or Knighthood." In a preface to this book he laments that "the exercises of Chivalry are not used and honoured as they were in ancient time, when the noble acts of the knights of England were renowned through the universal world;" and he further inveighs against the effeminate and unbracing exercises of his day, advising the nobility to leave them, and read "the noble volumes of St. Graal, of Lancelot,

of Tristram, of Galaol, of Percival, of Pierceforest, of Gawaine, and many more. There (he continues) shall ye see manhood, courtesy, and gentleness." At a subsequent date we find the mind of the great father of English Printing was still full of the high interest of this subject; and under this feeling he gave to the world an edition of the romances relating to King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. He tells us at the close of the preface to this work, that he printed it "to the intent that noble men may see and learn the noble acts of chivalry, the gentle and virtuous deeds that some knights used in those days, by which they came to honour, and how they that were vicious were punished, and oft put to shame and rebuke; humbly beseeching all noble lords and ladies, with all other estates that shall see and read in this said book and work, that they take the good and honest acts in their remembrance, and to follow the same. Wherein they shall find many joyous and pleasant histories, and many noble and renowned acts of humanity, gentleness, and chivalry. Do after the good (he continues), and leave the evil, and it shall bring you to good fame and renown."

The days of Chivalry, however, as an institution, were henceforth numbered. Attempts were certainly made by the 7th and 8th Henries to revive, in some degree, its ancient splendours; and by jousts, tournaments, and processions, to familiarise the people with its externals, but to little purpose. Doubtless much of the literature of the age was chivalric. Noble spirits loved to read and repeat the Knight's Tale in Chaucer; French and Spanish stories of warriors and dames were transfused

into English romance; the fine Chronicle of Froissart was translated into English by Lord Berners, at the express command of the bluff king himself; and in the following reign we find the luxuriant imagination of Spenser revelling in romance and allegory, and even giving a tone to the every-day life of the court of the Virgin Queen; while his contemporary genius—he of whom Ben Jonson says that “at his birth all the Muses met,”—of whom the author of the “Seasons” apostrophises as—

“The plume of war! with early laurels crown’d;  
The lover’s myrtle, and the poet’s bay,”—

the author of the Arcadia—the hero of Zutphen—Sir Philip Sydney—in his writings as in his life, appears to have had before him, and ever to be striving to realize, the ideal of a true knight. The names of Raleigh, of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and perhaps of some others, will occur to the historical reader, but with the reign of James we must consider the institution to have passed away; and we find in this king’s reign, Ben Jonson, in one of his plays, lamenting—

“——— Shields and swords  
Cobwebbed and rusty; not a helm affords  
A spark of lustre, which were wont to give  
Light to the world, and make the nation live.”

In this brief sketch I have not alluded to the general duties and obligations of the chivalric institution; such not being within the immediate scope of our inquiry to-night: history and romance abound with instances of its valour, its virtues, its devotion, its courtesy. Indeed, the highest possible degree of every Christian and manly

excellence was required of a knight. It was his duty to peril himself in the cause of his faith, of his order, and of the afflicted. Perfect fidelity to obligations—no compromise with expediency or circumstances—with true generosity of character,—were qualities expected to be developed in his person. Of the last-named quality, a remarkable instance is recorded by that valuable old chronicler, William of Malmesbury, who tells us that on the occasion of Matilda landing in England, near Arundel, to contend with Stephen for the throne, a letter of safe conduct and an honourable escort were supplied to her by King Stephen, to the castle of his brother, the Earl of Gloucester.

The true Knight, also—he whose mind was formed in the best mould of chivalric principles,—was a far more perfect personification of the tender passion than poets and romancers of a later date have ever dreamed of or delineated. His love was as Gower expresses it—

“All adoration, duty, and observance.”

And Chaucer puts into the mouth of his perfect and gentle knight, as a finish to his spirited picture of English nobles and gentlemen of his time—that is, during the reign of Edward III.,—

“To fight for a lady, *O benedicite*,  
It were a lusty sight for to see.”

Indeed, throughout every page of early romance, the names of noble dames and courtly damsels are inseparably associated with the adventures, the exploits, and the amusements of the cavalier, who is ever represented as being as far removed from the imputation of being a

"laggard in love" as a "dastard in war." But perhaps the character of a true knight cannot be better summed up than in the words of the following lament over the body of Sir Lancelot du Lake, which I extract (preserving the orthography) from an old translation of the *Morte d'Arthur*. His virtues are thus described:—  
"Thou wert never match'd of none earthly knight's hands; thou were the courtiest (courtliest) knight that ever bore a shield; thou wert the truest friend to thy lover that ever strode horse; thou wert the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman; thou wert the kindest man that ever struck with the sword; thou wert the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights; thou wert the meekest man and the gentlest that ever feasted in hall amongst ladies; and thou wert the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spere to the rest."

We must now revert briefly to the LITERATURE and SPORTS of the people, with a view to realize more distinctly the characteristics of the age in which Military Brotherhoods originated, flourished, and decayed.

The minstrel's lay, the poetry of the Troubadour, the romance of the learned clerk,—all spoke of love and war, of the duties and sports of chivalry. Every baronial knight had his troop of minstrels to accompany him to the field, and afterwards in the hall, to recount in either place the martial deeds which has renowned his house. Kings and Queens had their trains of songsters; and I may remind you that the noble hospital of St. Bartholomew, in London, owes its foundation to one of this

class—Raherus, or Rahere—the chief of the king's minstrels in the time of Henry I.\*

The *romances*,—a term applied originally to *poems* longer than the minstrel's or poet's lay—were also faithful minigrants of chivalry. The perilous adventures of Gothic knights, their high honour, tender gallantry, and solemn superstition, were all recorded in carefully preserved scrolls; and there was not a bay window in baronial hall without its chivalric volume, with which knights and squires beguiled the listless hours of peace.

But the grand repertory from which the love of adventure was supplied, and the chivalric tone of the age reflected, was, undoubtedly, the collection of the traditions and fables relating to King Arthur, and his knights of the Round Table—traditions to which I have already alluded, and which throughout our enquiry will re-

\* A beautiful description of the life and occupation of one of these minstrels will be found in Wordsworth's well-known poem "The Excursion," from which the following lines are extracted :—

"In days of yore how fortunately fared  
The Minstrel! wandering on from hall to hall,  
Baronial court or royal; cheered with gifts  
Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise;  
Now meeting on his road an armed knight,  
Now resting with a pilgrim by the side  
Of a clear brook;—beneath an abbey's roof  
One evening sumptuously lodged; the next  
Humbly in a religious hospital;  
Or with some merry outlaws of the wood;  
Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.  
Him, sleeping or awake, the robber spared;  
He walked—protected from the sword of war  
By virtue of that sacred instrument  
His harp, suspended at the traveller's side;  
His dear companion wheresoe'er he went  
Opening from land to land an easy way  
By melody, and by the charm of verse."

peatedly occur. I have just stated that a collection of these tales was one of the first books issued from the English press; the Lord Berners, I before spoke of, translated a copy of it from the French; I know not how many editions, or even versions, of it there have been before the public, with whom it has ever been a special favourite; Chaucer, and Spenser, and Gower, and Shakspeare, and Sydney, are full of allusions to it; and at present I see in the announcements of new books a translation of it, from the earliest French edition, by that indefatigable antiquary, Mr. Thomas Wright.\* From what I can gather of the history of this remarkable book, it appears that the traditions relating to its hero were in the first instance collected by an Arch-deacon Walter, of Oxford, from actual oral relations by certain residents of Brittany (that ancient colony of England), and formed part of a Latin history of Great Britain that was written in the time of Henry I., by a monkish historian, known as Geoffrey of Monmouth. One Wace, a monk, I believe, of St. Alban's, a translator-general of the age, turned it into Anglo-Norman verse, mingling with it all the stories on the same subject that were floating in the English mind. The subject being fitted to the martial spirit of the time—that of the first Crusade—and being rendered into the language of the upper classes, found its way alike into the baronial hall and the lady's bower; and we are told by Fitz-Stephen,

\* Whilst these remarks are in the hands of the printer, the author observes that a still wider acquaintance with these romances will be diffused by the publication and enormous sale of the Poet-Laureate's last work, "*Idylls of the King*."

who wrote a description of London in this reign, that nothing was read by the nobility but romances of Arthur and his Knights. And this general acquaintance with the hero and his companions speedily became incorporated with national sports and pastimes that nourished the chivalrous spirit. Fitz-Stephen tells us that in his time the exploits of the Knights of the Round Table were displayed in the Sunday amusements of the youth of London. At a later date Shakspeare alludes to them, when he describes Master Shallow as avowing that he remembers at Mile-End Green, when he lay at Clement's Inn, he was Sir Dagonet in Arthur's Show. And Puttenham, an author of the Elizabethan period, tells us that the recreations of the common people at Christmas and at bridals consisted of "hearing minstrels sing or recite stories of old times, as the tale of Sir Topas, the Reports of Bevis of Southampton, Guy of Warwick, Adam Bell, Clym of the Clough, and other romances and historical rhymes." And Burton, the author of that well-known but little-read book "the Anatomy of Melancholy," in enumerating the domestic amusements of his age, mentions, amongst others, "Merrie tales of errant knights, kings, queens, lovers, lords, ladies, giants, dwarfs, thieves, fairies, goblins, witches, and the rest." In another work, printed in 1553, entitled "The Arte of Rhetoricke," the same author makes a corresponding remark. He tells us, "If there be any older tale or strange history, well and wittily applied, all men love to hear it. As if one were called Arthur, some good fellows that were well acquainted with King Arthur's book, and the Knights of his Round Table, would want no matter



to make good sport, and for a need would dub him Knight of the Round Table, or else (which were much) prove him to be Arthur himself."

I have thus endeavoured to place before you a few of the influencing agencies of, and their consequent results upon, the age in which the military brotherhoods flourished. Contemporaneously, and with the same object in view—the solution of the problem how nations and races should realize a state of fraternity and equality—the monastic bodies and the trading fraternities were pursuing their respective obligations and objects. And remember, that this problem of realising this wished-for state of fraternity was the great question which harassed the minds of men from the days of monk Benedict to the Reformation; and which is shadowed forth in every institution of the Middle Ages, be the secondary objects of them what it may, learning or war, handicraft or trade, the labour of this world or the world to come. The part which the Military Brotherhoods occupy in this long chapter of European history, we will now proceed to examine.

Of Military Orders there were in England three:—The Knights Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem; the Knights Templars; and a third, of which we had but a few houses, and which seems to have been founded for the relief and support of lepers and impotent persons of the military profession, namely, the Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem. This last-named order, after the ruin of the Christian cause in Palestine, appears to have merged into a purely religious order—the Carmelites, I believe; and with other bodies of a

like foundation was swept away by the unsparing hand of Henry, at the suppression of the religious houses.

The Order of Knights Hospitallars, or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, took its name from an hospital built at Jerusalem for the use of pilgrims visiting the Holy Sepulchre ; some merchants belonging to Amalfi, a city in Italy, who traded to the East, having obtained from the Egyptian Khalif permission for its erection. The date given for this event is fixed in the eleventh century, somewhere about A.D. 1048. In this hospital abode an abbot and a good number of monks, who were of the Latin or Western Church, and followed the rule of St. Benedict. They devoted themselves to the reception and entertainment of pilgrims, and gave alms to those who were poor, or who had been despoiled by robbers, to enable them to pay the tax required by the Moslems for permission to visit the holy places. For even at that early day, we find many from all parts of Europe, under the name of palmers, moved by enthusiasm, or by a laudable faith, setting forth to visit the spots hallowed by the footsteps of their Lord, and to have their faith invigorated, and their thoughts chastened, by the personal survey of spots so memorable in the story of the world's redemption, and so endeared to their recollection as the material evidences of the faith, the sufferings, the triumphs, and the joys of kings and prophets, and saints, who, of old, "through faith inherited the promises;" and in after times the scenes of the righteous judgments upon a rebellious and blood-guilty nation. The number of pilgrims increasing, and the accommodation of this hospital being inadequate to their reception, we shortly

find another *hospitium* erected close to the earlier church, with a chapel dedicated to another St. John, a canonised Patriarch of Alexandria, named St. John Eleëmon, or the Compassionate. The monks of the latter establishment, having resolved to separate themselves from the older body, and pursue their works of charity alone and independently, effected an organisation which appears to have been framed on rules the most stringent and self-denying. They assumed as a distinctive dress a black mantle, with a white cross on the breast. For the services they rendered during the first Crusade, it appears that the leaders of the several armies composing it were in nowise unmindful or ungrateful. Godfrey of Bouillon gave to them one of his lordships in Brabant; and his brother and successor, Baldwin, gave them a share in all the booty taken from the infidels. These examples were followed by other Christian princes; so that in the space of a very few years the Hospital of St. John was in possession of numerous manors both in the East and in Europe, which were placed under the management of the members of this society. The Order, up to close of the first Crusade, I must remind you, remained a religious and charitable institution solely.

Some forty years later we find the members desirous of sharing the more arduous duties of their crusading brethren, and becoming a *military* order of monks,—the first body of men united by religious vows, who wielded the temporal sword against the enemies of the faith. In process of time it became divided into seven classes or languages—Italian, German, English, Arragonese, and the three great divisions of the French nation. Its

fame was now rapidly extending, and we find the sons of the noblest families in Europe pressing for admission into its ranks.

In the 13th century the Order is reputed to have possessed 19,000 manors in various Christian lands. This was the period of its highest elevation. Jealousies and feuds occurring between the brotherhood and their rivals the Templars, we find the Hospitallars triumphant. For five centuries the Order maintained the reputation of the most indomitable courage: military skill, personal bravery, and religious enthusiasm, were engaged in the cause of the Christian faith, and all Europe rang with recitals of their heroic exploits. We cannot undertake even an outline of their military career. In the various battles fought during the decline of the Christian cause in Palestine, we find the Hospitallars ever in the fore front. At Azotus (the Ashdod of the Old Testament) we find that fortress long defended by only ninety of these knights, and when at last taken by storm the victors walked over the dead bodies of the last of the brave garrison. At the siege of Acre, in 1291, by the Sultan of Egypt (for remember there have been several sieges of that memorable spot), we find the knights, with their brethren the Templars, defending the Christian cause and their ancient fame with more than mortal bravery. This, the last of their strongholds in Palestine, did not fall until their body was nearly exterminated, and many thousands of the infidels prostrated before their desperate valour. Compelled to retire, they turned their steps towards the sea, fighting all the way, and on the shore they found a small boat into which they threw them-

selves. A large vessel was not requisite—only seven knights remained alive. This sad remnant of a once numerous body fled to Cyprus, which island was then in the hands of a Christian prince. Here they summoned from Europe a general chapter of their body, which was readily responded to,—their determination to wage war upon the enemies of the Cross was evinced with an ardour mingled with revenge; and within ten years from their expulsion from Palestine we find them wrestling from the Moslems the Island of Rhodes. From the fact of their conquest and temporary possession of this island, the body is sometimes styled the Knights of Rhodes, and in their reduction and defence of it are associated some of the most heroic *memorabilia* of the Order. A few of the adjoining islands were added to the dominions of the Grand Master of the Order, whose name, Falk de Villaret, is preserved to us. This remarkable man, whose military abilities appear to form but a part of his high reputation, applied himself assiduously to the means of reviving commerce, and restoring Rhodes and its dependencies (the ancient Sporades) to their former flourishing state. The port of Rhodes was made free and open to all nations. Many Christians who had been scattered throughout Palestine, Greece, and Asia Minor, since the downfall of their cause in Palestine flocked to Rhodes, to enjoy the protection of the Knights of St. John, and share in the commerce which was rapidly developing itself; and as Vertot observes, a new, warlike, and commercial state arose, that soon became as powerful, by its riches, as it was formidable by the courage and valour of its sovereign knights.

At Rhodes, we find the Knights gaining laurels in another mode of warfare. Their vows binding them to perpetual war with the infidels, they now found the most enriching and profitable mode of carrying it on was by privateering or cruising against Mahometan vessels of all kinds, and against such ships or boats of the heterodox Greeks as were by them deemed piratical. Every Knight was bound to make at least one cruise in the course of the year;—and this mode of avenging themselves on the enemy appears to have been vastly relished by the body. By means of signals from a lofty tower, from whence ships could be discovered from a long distance, the swift and well-armed vessels of the Hospitallars were speedily got under weigh, and escape from so many pursuers, became almost impossible, and it is to be feared that at times many an unfortunate skipper fell into their hands, whose vessel was anything but a fair reprisal; and as the knights made their own admiralty court and laws, small hope of reparation was in store for any unlucky appellant. This mode of life was, however, found to be altogether incompatible with the vows and discipline of the Order. Enriched by prize money, and constantly excited by adventure and rapid change of associates and scenes, the Knights forming these cruising squadrons lost all semblance of a Monastic body. On their return from successful expeditions, we find that they drunk and committed other debaucheries, making the “religious city” of Rhodes look very like a profane Portsmouth or Chatham in our time.\* As naval heroes,

\* Knight's London. “Clerkenwell.”

many important conquests were effected by them. We find them in 1321 gaining an important advantage at sea over the Turks, when an attempt was made to drive them out of Rhodes. In 1344 we find their squadrons scouring the whole of the western coast of Asia Minor, and taking the town and fort of Smyrna, which, however, they were compelled to relinquish in 1400. From this date to 1522, when the great siege of Rhodes by the Turks commenced, we have accounts of repeated expeditions formed with successful results against their old enemies. Plans of almost gigantic ambition, such as the recovery of Palestine, the conquest of Egypt and the Morea were at times considered, and partially entered upon. The siege of 1522, whether considered in its effects upon Europe, the importance of the cause at issue, the bravery and high standing of combatants, the skill displayed in assault and in defence,—is justly considered by historians as one of the most memorable on record. The town in the course of two centuries, had been rendered by the Knights one of the strongest places in the world. In the words of an old writer, it was “compassed with a most strong double wall, and wide and deep trenches; it had thirteen stately towers, and five mighty bulwarks; in addition to which there were many natural advantages. The besieging force is stated to have consisted of 150,000 men, commanded in person by the Mahometan Sultan, Solyman IV., commonly called Solyman “the Magnificent;” while the besieged are stated to have numbered no more than 600 Knights, 5,000 regular troops, and some companies of militia, hastily raised on the island. The reply made to the

summons to surrender is amongst the most pithy of answers preserved to us on similar occasions ; and after thirteen days of inaction or hesitation on the part of the Turks, the batteries opened. Success at first attended the bravery of the Knights, each nation—Frank, German, Italian, English, and Spaniard, taking its respective position in the order or “language” into which it was divided by the constitutions of the body. The first bulwark blown up was that of the English, who are recorded to have four times driven the Turks back from the breach, and tore down the Mussulman flag they had planted there. When the siege had lasted four months, and the cause of the Order seemed deserted by all Christendom, and left to its own limited, or rather almost exhausted, resources, we find the Grand Master refusing to listen to any proposals of a capitulation ; and it was not until provisions and gunpowder were alike exhausted, and with a loss to the besiegers, as we are told, of nearly 100,000 men, that the Grand Master surrendered his fortress and his kingdom to the enemy of his faith : honourable terms, with permission to retire with his surviving knights, were, however, granted him. The old man lived to hear of the suppression of his Order, and the consequent severance of England from the Order, by Henry VIII., from which it is recorded that he shortly after died of grief.

After several changes of settlement, the Order fixed its quarters at Malta, and its dependent islands, the Emperor Charles V. giving the sovereignty of that island to them in the year 1530. The military history of the Order is, however, from this date, but very unimportant.



Here they maintained themselves till 1798, when the island was taken by Napoleon, at which time the number of Knights was estimated at about 3,000. The Order, however, continued, and still continues, to exist, notwithstanding the loss of its sovereign possessions; the present seat of the Chapter being at Ferrara, a city in the Papal States.

We have need only to note a few of the remarkable events in the history of the Order, apart from the outline of the military history which I have given you. In the rebellion of Wat Tyler, we find that the body had become, from the open parade of their riches, if not from their licentiousness and tyranny, especially obnoxious to the masses of the people, and a fearful chastisement was inflicted on them. We are told that the rebels "burnt all the houses belonging to St. John's, and then burnt the fair priory of the Hospital of St. John, causing the same to burn for the space of seven days." The prior also perished under the axe of the rebels. The rebuilding of the hospital, priory, and church, as also the gate now standing, and known as St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell,\* was immediately proceeded with; and at the suppression of the religious houses we find that the old site was again covered with buildings suited to the accommodation of a rich and powerful brotherhood. By statute 32 Henry VIII., the Order both in England and Ireland was dissolved on the alleged reason that the Knights adhered to a foreign jurisdiction. The prior, we are told, died on the very day of the dissolution of

\* Now used as a public house.

the Order. "His hospital," says Fuller, "and earthly tabernacle were buried together; and gold, though a great cordial, could not cure a broken heart." This is in reference to his having been allowed a pension of £1,000 per annum. The Brethren appear to have fared better from the ruthless King than the inmates of the monastic houses; nearly the whole of the annual value of their estates being settled on them, on account, as is recited in the act for their suppression, of the high birth and honourable breeding of the Knights. Queen Mary restored the Order; but in the first year of Elizabeth the society was completely and finally suppressed.

The only occasion in which the affairs of the Order have in any way been associated with England since the time of Elizabeth, is the very trifling one, recorded in the newspapers a short time ago, that in consideration of the important services rendered to the cause of the ancient faith of the Order in the British House of Commons by a most zealous partisan, the honour of knighthood was about to be bestowed on the honourable member; and that at the special request of His Holiness the Pope, a distinguished deputation was entrusted with the ceremony of conducting the installation.

We pass on to the other important Brotherhood—the **TEMPLARS**. Like their brethren, the Hospitallars, their origin is associated with the defence of the Holy Places. During the first Crusade, we are told that Hugh de Payens and eight other Knights, pitying the sufferings of the Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem, recently recovered from the Infidels by the first Crusaders, entered into a solemn compact to devote their lives and fortunes

to the defence of the highway from the inroads of the Moslems, and from the ravages of the numerous robbers who infested it. "Poor fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ" they called themselves; but as their services became conspicuous, and from having their quarters within the enclosure of the Temple on Mount Moriah (the site of the great Jewish structure destroyed by Titus), and where the Emperor Justinian had, in the sixth century, and the Caliph Omar in the seventh, erected a magnificent assemblage of buildings, the new society became known as the *Knighthood of the Temple of Solomon*. Their rise was rapid, and so was the growth of their ambition. Presently they enlarged their objects from the defence of the roads to the defence of the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem itself, now ruled by Baldwin, who had succeeded his brother, Godfrey de Buillon, the leader of the first crusade; and eminent men from various countries joined their society, and threw the whole of their possessions into the common stock. A mission to the Pope, and to the several great potentates in Europe, resulted in making the Order known throughout Christendom; and hundreds of the noblest knights in Europe returned with the mission to Jerusalem. Templar establishments speedily arose in various parts of England, the chief however being in London. Increasing in numbers and wealth, the newly-formed society set about erecting their magnificent church and buildings on the spot still bearing their name, the Patriarch of Jerusalem having come over to England to officiate at the consecration. This event may be said to mark the consummation of the establishment of the

Order in England; from which date the importance of the Templars is ever conspicuous. Of the part which they took in maintaining the Christian cause in the Holy Land, we need only remark that with the Hospitallars they shared in the perils and glories of many a well-fought fray. Generous emulation sometimes degenerated into envy, and the heats and feuds of the rival Orders at times violated the peace of the country, and brought scandal upon the Christian name; but these dissensions were speedily brought to a close when danger approached their charge, and the standard of the Musselman was seldom raised on the frontier of the kingdom without the trumpets of the Brotherhood in every preceptory and commandery receiving and echoing the challenge. But the prowess of the Templars was particularly conspicuous in the moments of the Kingdom's final fate. When the Christians of the Holy Land were reduced to the possession of Acre, and 200,000 Mameluke Tartars, commanded by the Kalif of Egypt, were encamped round its walls, the defence of the city was entrusted to the Grand Master of the Order; and well and chivalrously did he maintain his high and sacred charge. Acre fell, as we stated in our summary of the achievements of the Hospitallars, but not until this heroic representative of Christian chivalry and most of the noble followers of his standard had been slain. That glorious standard, with its terrific inscription—"BEAUSEANT," forming the war cry of the Templars, was now to be unfurled no more; the few survivors of Acre retired to Armenia, and Cyprus; and with their departure appeared the last hope of arresting in the East the progress of Mahometan domination.

The Templars having abandoned the struggle in the East, attempted to retain and increase their power in the Western States of Europe. Their great wealth and noble birth doubtless enabled them to occupy a prominent position in France and England for some time. We find a brother of the Order one of the barons who was present at the signing of Magna Charta; and the names preserved in the records of the Order show that the noblest families in England sought admission to its ranks, while even kings and queens were proud of its friendship, and kept at times much of their treasure in the Temple. Henry II. and Queen Elinor desired to be buried in that place; and Henry III. was educated there. But the position thus attained was destined speedily to have a very sad and tragic end. Within twenty years from the heroic defence of Acre, and at a time when this last great act in their brilliant career was fresh in the memory of Europe, we find schemes contrived, and plans laid to effect their entire destruction,—a destruction as complete, and in some manner resembling the fate of the Mameluke Guards by the late Sultan of Turkey. Granted that a portion of truth is due to the charges of licentiousness and general laxity of their lives;—that their conduct in espousing the cause of the Pope at times against their sovereign and nobles was highly indiscreet and perhaps treasonable; that the fact of an *imperium in imperio* was incompatible with the prerogatives of the crown and the laws of the realm,—we are horror-struck with the wickedness, the cruelty, and injustice attending their suppression. It is a sad tale to repeat to you, though not without its moral dignity or absorbing interest. The

persecution began in France under that bold bad man known as Philip the Fair, assisted by the then Pope, Clement V. Nearly all the Templars in France were arrested at the same time, and nearly all remained true to their Order. Some of them, the Grand Master amongst the number, gave way for a time under the fierce and bitter trial of their sufferings, and under the influence of acute pain confessed to imaginary crimes or to mal-practices which could have existed only in the morbid imaginations of their persecutors. As soon as the torture ceased, they withdrew their declarations, and protested loudly in favour of the purity and worth of their Order; nor when actually put to a shameful, lingering, and painful death, did they subsequently modify their testimony in favour of the cause they espoused, and for which they suffered. Of one hundred and forty Templars who were first put to the torture, no less than thirty-six actually perished in the hands of their tormentors. In a subsequent decree, *fifty-four* members of the Order, who had given the most decisive proofs of their innocence (for be it remembered, an acknowledgment of the guilt imputed to them would have saved their lives), were sentenced to be burnt; and this most atrocious act was performed in the most barbarous manner at Paris. Philip, having by a continuance of these and similar atrocities, succeeded in removing the most high-principled and bravest members (amongst them the Grand Master, whose more than human self-possession in the midst of agonies perhaps without parallel, has oft furnished a theme for the poet, and a study for the painter)—managed to make the remainder

more tractable ; and the sequestration of all their estates in France was speedily effected. All historians who have spoken of this event, whatever opinion they may entertained on the general question, friends or enemies—natives or strangers—have unanimously attested the virtuous courage, the noble intrepidity, and the religious resignation which these martyrs of heroism displayed. Arrived at the place of punishment, they beheld with firmness and placidity the piles of wood and the torches already lighted in the hands of the executioners. In vain a messenger of the King promised pardon and liberty to those who did not persist in their retractations—in vain their surrounding friends endeavoured to touch their hearts by prayers and tears. The virtues of constancy, love of truth, and resignation, engrossed them wholly. Invoking God, the Virgin, and the Saints, they sang the song of death ; triumphing over the most cruel tortures, they believed themselves already in Heaven, and died in the midst of their songs.

We now turn to the fall of the Red Cross Knights in England. Edward II., son-in-law of Philip, was King. The French King having matured his plans for the suppression of the Order, lost no time in influencing his son-in-law to adopt similar proceedings in England. For a time, we read, these overtures were unheeded, and that Edward and his Council expressed the strongest surprise at the charges made against the Templars, and declared his intention of taking no steps without the fullest previous investigation into their truth. He even wrote to the Pope, and implored the favour of the Papal See in behalf of an injured and calumniated body of men.

But the feeble mind of Edward was soon won over by French artifice or importunity; and by a royal decree the sheriffs in the different counties in England and Wales seized the estates and imprisoned the persons of the Templars. A somewhat milder fate, compared with that of their brethren in France, attended the mockery of trial that the Knights were subjected to in England. Instances of heroism worthy the ancient fame of the Order were not wanting; and the incidents connected with the last days of this once-mighty institution form an interesting chapter in English mediæval history, familiar probably to most of you. One incident, however, relating to these proceedings, I cannot forbear reminding you of:—The Pope having gently censured the King of England for having forbidden the use of torture in the examination of the Knights, and the commissioners (chiefly ecclesiastics), before whom the judicial proceedings were conducted, having received instructions to employ coercive means to extort confession, we read in Hollingshed that the Archbishop of York—I am sorry I cannot give you his name—one of these commissioners, sought counsel of his clergy, whether torture could be used, and mentioned to them the fact so grateful to an Englishman, that torture was judiciously unknown in this country; adding that there was no machine for such purpose, and rather drily asking them whether he should send abroad for one, as he should not like to be charged before his sovereign with negligence. The Order being suppressed, the majority of the Knights were received into different monasteries, with the addition, in some instances, of small pensions doled out to



them. Another Papal bull having transferred the property of the defunct body to the rival order of the Hospitallars, we find the English monarch confirming that decree, but we have reason to believe that only a small portion of it was realized by the new possessors. Both before and after the passing of the royal word, Edward gave to different laymen much of the forfeited property; and numerous manors were claimed by the nobility as being the heirs of the original donors. Respecting their possessions in London, with which the memory of the Order is so intimately associated, we find the Earls of Lancaster and Pembroke, and the royal favourite Spenser successively had grants of them, but in consequence of the events of death, rebellion, or attainder, they reverted to the crown. In the following reign the Hospitallars got possession of the premises, and devised them to some students of law then residing in Thavies Inn; and on the dissolution of the last-named Order by Henry VIII., the lawyers became tenants to the Crown, in which position they remained till the time of James I., who granted them the entire premises in fee. The spacious halls and gloomy cells of the military monks were now converted into the chief house of the great and most ancient Common Law University of England; and for more than five centuries the retreats of the religious warriors have been devoted to the studious and eloquent pleaders of causes—a new kind of Templars, who, as old Fuller quaintly remarks, now “defend one Christian from another, as the old ones did Christians from the Pagans.” By their munificence and pious reverence for the memory of their pre-occupants, the

round Church, where in former days the piety and gratitude of the Templars were wont to be poured forth, has been restored by the Benchers of the Temple in a style of perhaps unequalled grandeur and correct taste; forming, as most of you are aware, an object of deep interest to the ecclesiologist and historical reader; and as such is generally one of the spots most eagerly visited by sight-seers when on a visit to the Metropolis.

I will briefly add, that the Templars, like their brethren the Hospitallars, still possess a "local habitation and a name," having a chapter in Paris, and showing an unbroken line of Grand Masters and officials, with the charters, statutes, seals, records, standards, &c., of the Order. Since the days of the heroic Jaques de Molai, the names of some of the noblest families of France appear in the list of transmitted Grand Masters, and honourable mention is ever and anon made of the names of the Knights in the military records of that country. Amongst the victims of the first Revolution, we have the name of the Grand Master of the Templars, as one who died in the cause of his unfortunate King.

We must direct your attention to the *organisation or constitution* of these Military Brotherhoods. Like the members of the religious fraternities, these soldier monks were bound by the monastic vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. These general principles of the religious societies of knighthood gave way, and fitted themselves to the changes and demands of society; thus asectic privations occasionally gave place to chivalric gallantry; the vow of chastity was mitigated into a vow of connubial fidelity; and when men of noble birth and high fortune

became Knights of either of the Orders we have named, the vow of poverty was dispensed with, or explained away to the satisfaction of conscientious scruples. By the statutes of the Templars, a member was permitted to hold estates, provided that at his death he bequeathed some portion of them to his Order. A distinctive dress was adopted, the Hospitallars assuming a black mantle with a white cross on the breast; while the Templars adopted a white mantle with a red cross. On the admission of a brother into the Order of the Hospitallars, the following charge was delivered by the prior of the preceptory or commandery, as their respective establishments were named:—"Receive the yoke of the Lord: it is easy and light, and you shall find rest for your soul. We promise you nothing but bread and water, a simple habit, and of but little worth. We give to you, your parents, and relations a share in the good works performed by our Order, and by our brethren, both now and hereafter throughout the world." And again, continues the ritual of admission, "We place this cross on your breast, my brother, that you may love it with all your heart; and may your right hand ever fight in its defence, and for its preservation! Should it ever happen that, in combating against the enemies of the faith, you should retreat, desert the standard of the cross, and take to flight, you will be stripped of this truly holy sign, according to the statutes and customs of the Order, as having broken the vows you have just taken, and you will be cut off from our body as an unsound and corrupt member." While not engaged in the Holy Wars, the life of an Hospitallar did not differ much from that of an

ordinary monastic recluse. The rule of St. Bennet or St. Augustine, or some other of the several designations of the religious bodies was adopted for the internal discipline of the body. They might have been seen, as the most favourable of their historians represent them to have been engaged, attending the sick, feeding the hungry, spending their own leisure in prayer and meditation, avoiding all idle pastimes, and preserving the gravity of men dedicated to the service of the cross. That this severity of life became relaxed, there is little doubt. In that remarkable satire known as "The Visions of Piers Plowman," the date of which is assigned to the time of Richard II., the military monks, like their brethren of the monasteries, came in for a share of the author's ill-humour: and the fearful retribution which befel them at Wat Tyler's rebellion, which I have alluded to, would tend to show that popular respect for them did not stand very high. The stated religious services of the monastic life were required of the brethren, which probably were adapted to the military tastes of the brethren: the surrounding memorials of military greatness, the armed warrior in stone, the overhanging banner and gauntlet, while they proved the frail nature of earthly happiness, showed what were the subjects wherein men wished for fame beyond the grave. The pomp of the choir service, the swelling note of exultation in which the victories of the Jews over the enemies of Heaven were sung, could not but excite the heart to admiration of chivalric renown, and in moments of enthusiasm the hooded warrior would be ready to cast his cowl aside, and exchange his rosary for the belt of the Knight.

The discipline of the Templars appears to have been more severe than that of the Hospitallars. The statutes for the government of the Order were drawn up by St. Bernard, the Symeon Stylites of the Western Church. This holy man,—who, I fear, would have received but rough justice from a jury of fair damsels, and the lady-loves of Knights,—on one occasion, as we read in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints,” having cast a glance askance at a fair face, imposed upon himself the penance of an eighteen hours’ immersion in a muddy pool; and in a like spirit he drew up the ascetic code of laws, which governed the ancient Templars. You will remember probably, most of you, the trial scene of Rebecca at Templestowe, in Scott’s well-known tale of *Ivanhoe*, where, on the Grand Master rehearsing the statutes bearing on the charge against the fair Jewess, the younger Templars are described as evincing a levity of manner not at all consistent with the vows they had taken. We must, however, consider this a novelist’s licence, as we have no reason to doubt the concurrent testimony of the witnesses, when charges of almost every shade of guilt were preferred against the Templars at the suppression of their Order, that no departure from their vows of chastity could be alleged; while some of them uncharitably observed that this consistency of conduct with their vows was only adopted as a cloak for other delinquencies.

Obedience to the Grand Masters or Priors of the several preceptories was most stringently enjoined by St. Bernard’s rules. The punishment was cruelly severe, as we are reminded by a view of the Penitential Cell

still preserved in the old wall of the Temple Church. This dreary place of solitary confinement is only four feet six inches long, and two feet six inches wide, so that it would be impossible for a grown person to lie down with any degree of comfort in it. In this miserable cell were confined the refractory and disobedient brethren, and those upon whom were enjoined severe penance with confinement. Instances are recorded of this rigour and severity of punishment terminating in death; and in the report of the commissioners charged with conducting the examination of the Templars, the case of the Grand Preceptor of Ireland, Sir Walter de Bachelor, is adduced as being a victim. A contemporary writer and ex-witness informs us that imprisonment and scourgings on the bare back by the Grand Master himself were of frequent occurrence; while even in the church on Sundays whippings before the whole congregation were of no uncommon repetition. An instance is also recorded of Brother Adam de Valaincourt, a Knight of a noble family, who, having quitted the Order and, smitten with remorse, afterwards returning, was admitted into fellowship only on complying with the following penance:—He was compelled by the master to eat for a year on the ground with the dogs; to fast four days in the week on bread and water; and every Sunday to present himself naked at the church, before the high altar, and receive the discipline from the hands of the officiating priest.

The sin for which the angels fell is ever brought against the Templars by writers; and the oft-quoted tale of our Richard Cœur de Lion, to Foulkes when re-

proached by him with the vices of his court, designated by that holy man under the title of the King's three favourite daughters—Pride, Debauchery, and Avarice, in which the monarch said that he had already parted with his eldest daughter to the Templars,—is perhaps indicative that the Order had greatly fallen away from the virtues of its original members. The tale, however, whether authentic or not, shows that the Order was generally believed to be open to the reproach of pride at a very early period of its history. A recent publication of the Camden Society, which I am sorry I have not been able to get a sight of, being a correct statement of income and expenditure for one year,—I forget the exact date—throws some interesting light on the manner in which the Grand Master managed the finances of the Order; and I believe records the unpleasant fact of his having occasionally transactions with Jews and usurers, which must have sorely tested the consistency of that great man,—dealings with that out-lawed race being strictly prohibited by the statutes of the Order.

Now we must leave these interesting sons of the past, joining in the old dirge—

“The Knights are dust,  
And their good swords are rust,  
Their souls are with the saints we trust.”

Something must be said of the *influence* which these Brotherhoods exercised on the age in which they flourished, and to what extent that influence has reacted upon the military hero of succeeding ages. Fraternity or companionship, respect to elders or superiors, vows of unceasing hostility to the enemies of his faith, stated

religious services, great self-denial, and a general merging of the individual into the companion—strike us as the prominent features of one of these soldier monks. The natural tendencies of such a combination of external circumstances would, we should premise, tend to the development of somewhat of the following results:—A character of mildness tempered the natural ferocities of war when waged by one Christian nation with another. The knight was kind and courteous to his prisoner; because he saw in him a brother; and while the system of ancient manners would have limited this feeling to people of one nation, the soldier of a religious fraternity did not bound his humanity by country or soil, for Christian chivalry was spread over most parts of Europe, and formed mankind into one band, one order of men. From the same principle all the courtesies of private life were communicated to strangers; and gentleness of manners, and readiness of service expanded from a private distinction into a universal character. In the wars carried on with the Moslems for the preservation or extension of his faith, the knight did not suffer either prudence, or calculation, or convenience to check noble aspirations. He traversed countries, or he crossed the sea to the Holy Land, reckless of pain or danger; confiding in the word and in the constancy of a brother, a substitute for military skill or strategem was, if occasion arose, readily found. The knight looked to his fame as a recompense for his toils, and this value of the opinions of others taught him to avoid shame and disgrace; thus that fine sense of morality and voluntary submission to



its maxims, which we call honour, became a part of his daily life and conversation.

And are not these characteristics reflected on the soldier of our own times? In comparing the features of European warfare with those of the ancient world, or (more marked still) with those of even the most polished states of Asia, we must refer to past ages for much of the superiority which the contrast will afford. We boast our generosity in battle, the open display of hostilities, and our hatred of treachery and the secret meditations of revenge. And these qualities are to be assigned, not to any opinions which have been infused into our character during the last few hundred years—for we know of no such resemblance between those qualities and any such opinions,—but rather they are to be traced back to those days of ancient Europe, when the knight was quick to strike, and generous to forgive; and when he would rather present harness and arms to his foe than that the battle should be unfairly and unequally fought. This *spirit*, thought not the *form*, of the chivalric times has survived to ours, and forms one of our graces and distinctions. Fixed government and wise laws have removed the necessity for, and quenched the spirit of knight-errantry and romance; and happily for the world, the torch of religious persecution has long since sunk into ashes. The chivalric sentiment, however, still clings to us. The modern orders of military merit (palpable copies of some of the forms of Middle Age distinctions) constitute, as it is termed, the “cheap defence of nations,” and keep alive the personal nobility of knighthood, ever and anon

turning up to public admiration a Nelson or a Havelock, alike paling the pretensions of birth or the presumption of wealth.

In connection with the subjects of these papers, I have to congratulate all students of our national history and national literature upon the commencement and complete success of a design planned by the late, and carried out by the present, Government.\* I allude to the publication, under competent editors, of the *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland, during the Middle Ages*.† Some three or four of these precious relics of our earliest literature have appeared, under the immediate auspices of the present Master of the Rolls, which we hail as an earnest of what we may expect from him for the future; and which will go far to remove from us the national reproach of needlessly and uselessly storing up our national archives. Hitherto the issue of such works has been restricted to the limited means, and confined almost exclusively to the private libraries of a few of our learned societies; but let us hope that a better day has dawned, and that for the first time since our existence as a nation a great and rational effort has been made for placing the materials of our history not only beyond the reach of danger—no small consideration—but in the hands of all those who are willing and anxious to draw that history from authentic materials. With national archives and fragmentary records exceeding in truthfulness and number those of any nation, ancient or modern, the sacred annals of the Jews perhaps

\* January, 1859. The Government of Lord Derby.

† London: Longmans.—See Appendix.

excepted, let us congratulate ourselves that the desire and ambition of many a student in history will henceforth be realized, by the carrying out of this good work ; that not only will detached passages and notices of fact, scattered through many an invaluable and hitherto neglected record, highly interesting in a literary and antiquarian point of view, be now laid open, but which will also place in a new and unexpected light the daily life, the state of the arts, solemnities, the commerce, the internal and external resources of our supposed ignorant and barbarous forefathers.

Let us, then, with an honest pride, herald to all parts of our empire—that empire on which the sun never sets—the moral to be educed from the various contents of these memorials ;—let us show to our countrymen, and to our fellow-subjects on both sides of the globe, that in them are to be learned lessons of priceless value ;—that the scenes enacted of old at Clarendon and Runnymede are worthy the imitation and the grateful contemplation of patriots and pioneers in all succeeding ages ;—and that in these records of our civilization, our progress, and our liberties, they may understand something of the blessings we have so long enjoyed—something of that patriotism which so jealously watches over and preserves our liberties—something of that never-dormant spirit of progress which is ever seeking new fields of moral victory, and something of that spontaneity of emotion which prompts us, whenever dangers from within or without are threatened, to merge every other consideration into a love of country, and to fervently join in the Briton's prayer, —ESTO PERPETUA !

[Amongst the authorities consulted by the Author of the foregoing remarks, may be enumerated "*Mills' History of Crusades*," "*History of Chivalry*," by the same author, "*Addison's Account of the Temple Church*," and the same author's "*History of the Knights Templars*," "*History of the Middle Ages*" (*Lardner's Cyclopædia*), "*The Exploits of the Knights of Malta*" (*Constable's Miscellany*), and *Spenser's and Chaucer's Poems*. To the student of early English History the *Researches* of Sir Francis Palgrave and Dr. Pauli are invaluable. Besides the publication of the "*Memorials*" referred to, and easily procured, the Author has observed, connected with the subject here treated upon, the announcement of two important works, viz. ;—*A History of the Middle Ages*, from the German of Leonhard Zumpt (*Rivingtons*), and a complete *History of the Knights of St. John*, by Major Whitworth Porter (*Longmans*)].

THE END.



## Appendix.

The following are the Titles of the Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, alluded to at the close of the third Lecture; additional ones are in course of preparation :—

*Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, edited by Rev. Joseph Stevenson, 8s. 6d.

*Chronicle of England*, by John Capgrave, edited by Rev. S. C. Hingeston, 8s. 6d.

*Lives of Edward the Confessor*, edited by Rev. H. R. Luard, 8s. 6d.

*Liber de Illustribus Henricis*, by John Capgrave, edited by Rev. F. C. Hingeston, 8s. 6d.

——— Translation of ditto, by Rev. F. C. Hingeston 10s. 6d.

*Monumenta Franciscana*, edited by Rev. J. S. Brewer, 8s. 6d.

*Wyclif's Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, edited by Rev. W. Shirley, 8s. 6d.

*Stewart's Buik of the Chronicles of Scotland*, edited by W. B. Turnbull, 8s. 6d.

*Historia de Monasterii S. Augustini Cantuarensis*, edited by Rev. C. Hardwicke, 8s. 6d.

*Eulogium Historiarum*, edited by F. C. Haydon, 8s. 6d.

*Memorials of King Henry V.*, edited by C. A. Cole 8s. 6d.

*Bernard André's History of King James VII.*, edited by James Gairdner, 8s. 6d.

**Kendal,**  
**Printed by THOS. B. HUDSON,**  
**Highgate.**









